Beyond Boarding Schools

A Dissertation
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
BY

Pamela Johns Danforth

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Dr. Timothy Lensmire

December 2017

Acknowledgements

I was able to complete my dissertation because of the love and support of my husband, Jerry. I am also grateful to my research participants. Thank you for sharing your rich and intriguing stories with me.

Dedication

To my mother, Delores Johns, a single parent who dedicated her life to raising three children. She is my inspiration and to me the model of an independent, strong woman. Unfortunately, she has Alzheimer's disease and as such she is unaware that I have completed my Ph.D. However, I do know, that she would be proud.

Abstract

This study tells the stories of Oneida people who have attended public schools. These stories collected through the use of face to face interviews, were analyzed using the research methodology of narrative inquiry and autobiography. My interest in this subject was originally generated by my interest in the boarding school experience and its harmful practices which perpetrated extreme injustices on many tribes through the abusive manipulation of their children. I do not believe there is an overabundance of boarding school stories, but I have always been interested in the American Indian experience in non-boarding schools, especially public schools.

Three main themes emerged which I address in three chapters: Racism, Inspirations, and The Long and Winding Road. Racism in school was something all of my participants experienced. Inspirations is addressed because all were inspired in various ways to achieve their goals. The Long and Winding Road addresses and provides insight in regards to the propensity for many of my participants to have taken a longer time to complete higher education than is the norm in mainstream society.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Introduction

This study aims to tell the stories of Oneida people who have attended public schools. These stories, which are collected through the use of interviews, will be analyzed using the research methodology of narrative inquiry and autobiography. Dhunpath (2000) states that "Narrative research is dedicated to celebrating the voices of the silenced. But more than that it celebrates biography as an authentic reflection of the human spirit, a mirror to reflect visions of our other selves" (p.550). This fact makes narrative research especially appropriate for use with marginalized populations such as Indigenous people. Because of this fact, narrative inquiry is very fitting and appropriate for this dissertation as my research participants are all members of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin, as am I.

My interest in this subject was generated by my interest in the boarding school experience and its harmful practices, which perpetrated extreme injustices on many tribes through the abusive manipulation of their children. The effect this experience has had on individual tribes and people and the historical trauma generated by colonial education still affects many to this day. Many in mainstream society are unaware that freedoms that many take for granted are rights that Indigenous people have had to continuously fight for. I do not believe there is an overabundance of boarding school stories, but I have always been interested in the American Indian experience in non-boarding schools, especially public schools. In researching American Indian education, the experiences of American Indian people in public schools has proven to be complex yet intriguing to me.

I have found very few studies that address this subject, so I believe there is a gap in the research in this area.

To provide context for this study, my first chapter presents a background on American Indian education from the traditional education that American Indian people provided for their children to colonial education as imposed by the U.S. government through the use of boarding schools. The American Indian educational experience differs greatly from any other segment of the American population.

Background information consists of historical information on the Oneida of Wisconsin as their placement in Wisconsin is a compelling story that ties into the contemporary information that is also provided as all of my research participants are Oneida tribal members, as am I. Background information is also provided on the numerous laws, policies, and legislative actions that have been implemented by Congress in regard to American Indian education. The tensions caused by many of these initiatives and the development and growth of American Indian self-determination is also detailed.

There is much to be discovered through the use of stories as I have already learned some history of the local area in regard to schooling through informal interviews. I have looked through our archives at the Oneida Cultural Heritage Department and there is very little written documentation on the schools that Oneidas attended from the 1950s to 1990-time frame. I believe that personal narratives will provide important insight and information in regard to the public school experiences of Oneida people.

As I describe in my "Methods" chapter, I use interviews and autobiography to gather my research participants' stories. I have interviewed six very accomplished

Oneida people in regard to their experience in public schools. In analyzing, I am laying stories side by side including my own. As a researcher, I intend to look for the 'stories within the stories,'" as stated by Schaafsma and Vinz (2001). This process of analysis involves placing stories alongside each other, alongside one's own story, and finding the larger story behind an initial story. As stated by Schaafsma et al. (2001), "If researchers and narrators maintain the flexibility to look for the stories within stories, the richness seems to emerge" (p. 72.).

It was unexpected, but three main themes have emerged which I address in three chapters. The three strongest themes that emerged out of the participants' school stories are Racism, The Long and Winding Road, and Inspirations. Racism in school was something all of my participants experienced. Inspirations is addressed because all were inspired in various ways to achieve their goals. The Long and Winding road addresses and provides insight in regards to the propensity for many of my participants to have taken a longer time to complete higher education than is the norm in mainstream society. As the analyzing of the interviews progressed I was able to provide more insights and rich narratives that addressed the three themes that evolved out of the interviews for this dissertation.

"If the Great Spirit had desired me to be a white man he would have made me so in the first place. He put in your heart certain wishes and plans, and in my heart he put other and different desires. It is not necessary for eagles to be crows." --Chief Sitting Bull

Chapter One: The History of Colonial Education

The complexity of Indian education as it evolved over hundreds of years is an area that requires careful exploration. While Indian boarding schools have received attention in the history of national settlement (and resettlement), much less is documented about the underlying social, political, regional, and personal influences that affected Indian education in the US. What were the policies and theories that directed American Indian education and who were the policy makers? How was political change at the national level reflected in policies and practices, and what were the causes and effects, as a result of unique adaptation to particular tribal groups, language issues, and self-governance?

As stated in Lomawaima (2004) American Indian education has two different meanings. “American Indian education can refer to the education of American Indian people by American Indian people or this term can refer to education that has been designed for American Indian people by colonizing nations” (p. 422). In this paper the term American Indian education will refer to “Colonial education”, the purpose of this type of education was to eradicate Native cultures, languages, and belief systems “and substitute values and knowledge judged to be civilized” (Lomawaima, 2004, p.422).

Groups and individuals, mainly congressional, administrative or religious, had strong beliefs as to how American Indians should be dealt with in general and educated in particular. In this chapter, the term policy makers, shall refer to the groups and individuals that used their beliefs to influence, develop, and implement official reports

and legislation which has driven the education of American Indians as delivered by mainstream America. The majority of policies were of the assimilationist view but on occasion the policies would shift in different directions, and these will be discussed as well.

The first section of this chapter provides a brief description of the traditional practices of American Indian peoples or "education of American Indian people by American Indian people" as a contrast to the education system imposed by the governmental policies of the United States (Lomawaima, et al. 2004). The next section provides a basic background into boarding schools which were run by the federal government, and mission schools which were administered by various religious institutions. Political policies fueled by assimilationist beliefs that established the procedures and practices implemented in mission and boarding schools will be examined.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs, (BIA) a component of the Department of the Interior, has had and continues to have considerable influence over the direction of American Indian education. The BIA policies, the shifts and changes and the policy makers will be identified and discussed. Many worldwide and federal events have played a role directly or indirectly in influencing American Indian education. These events and the subsequent repercussions will be identified and discussed.

Lastly, the surge of American Indian self-determination from the 1950s to the 1990s is identified and examined. For the purpose of this dissertation the issue of American Indian self- determination will be limited to this time frame. What initiatives took place and when was the American Indian voice finally heard? The tensions that

arose and continue between the tribes and the federal government will be discussed along with their effect on American Indian education.

Traditional Indian Education

Indian education by Indian people "has been dedicated, as in all human societies, to perpetuating family values, language, religion, politics, economies, skills, sciences, and technologies" (Lomawaima, 2004, p. 422). American Indian people had their own traditions for educating their children long before the Europeans came to America. One example was the cradleboard which placed the child in an upright position at an equal visual level with their family and community. Besides being carried on the back of their parent the child was often hung above or alongside their family members while they worked or engaged in social functions. This practice took into consideration the mental development of the child and increased their ability to learn by observation and listening (Swisher, 1996). The style and construction of cradleboards varied by tribe and region but the practice was universal among tribes.

The traditional society included a large extended family with the child occupying a central role. A loving attitude of appreciation and acceptance was commonly exhibited to all children. Many American Indian nations did not employ corporal punishment; this was held in contempt by many Europeans. A Jesuit missionary complained that "…these barbarians cannot bear to have their children punished, even scolded, not being able to refuse anything to a crying child…" (Ing, 1981, p.47).

According to Eastman (1991), listening, learning by observation, and demonstrations of the skill when the child was ready were common practices. Many of

the games children played were games that would impart skills they would need as adults. Young boys played games of hunting and tracking and battle while young girls would play at setting up their homes and providing for their families.

> Listening was especially important because the traditional culture was an oral culture with important knowledge being passed on orally from generation to generation. Traditional practices were also rich in oral language usage with children being asked on a regular basis to recall, describe, and analyze their daily events, activities, and observations (Eastman, 1991).

The teachers were respected family and community members who were considered specialists in particular skill areas. There was no standardization, but rather learning was individualized and differentiated. In many tribes, gender roles were more relaxed as there have been documented cases of individuals performing activities outside the norm of their gender and still being accorded respect and acceptance. I see this as evidence that American Indian society respected diversity and individualism much more than colonizing Europeans.

Indian Education as Imposed by Governmental Policy

Indian education as imposed by the government and churches had a negative start as it was used as a mechanism for 'civilizing' and Christianizing American Indian people. As stated in the first federal statute on Indian education which was debated in 1818 by a congressional committee:

> In the present state of our country, one of two things seems to be necessary, either that these sons of the forest should be moralized or exterminated. Humanity

> would rejoice at the former, but shrink with horror at the latter. Put into the hands of their children, the primer and the hoe, and they will naturally, in time, take hold of the plow (as cited in Hagan, 1985, p. 98).

The subsequent loss of Indigenous culture, language, and identity is a direct result of the influences of schools established by the United States government and various Christian churches. This chapter will examine how European and American involvement in Indian education was based on policies and practices that established and maintained "a pattern of power imbalances which favor cultural deficit explanations or theories" (Bishop, 2003, p.1). Cultural Deficit explanations or "deficit theories" blame the victims and see the focus of the problem as the lack of inherent ability, lack of cultural appropriateness, or limited resources, in short, some deficiency at best, a 'pathology' at worst."

As previously stated, American Indians were viewed as culturally deficient in comparison to Europeans. The solution to their deficiency was that they, American Indians, needed to change their ways, and that their only salvation was if they were to share the same values as 'White American" communities. This mentality is displayed in many of the testimonies given by the policy makers and commissioners of the times. One example is the following statement by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1887:

> Schools should be established, which children should be required to attend; their barbarous dialects should be blotted out and the English language substituted. The object of greatest solicitude should be to break down the prejudices of tribe among the Indians; to blot out the boundary lines which divide them into distinct

> nations, and fuse them into one homogenous mass. Uniformity in language will do this, nothing else will. (Atkins, cited in Crawford, 1992: 48; emphasis added)

Clearly, it is evident that the White American policy makers sought to change American Indian communities by using schools as a vehicle of change which would force American Indian children to give up their tribal identities and assimilate into the dominate society.

Mission Schools

The first American Indian schools were run by churches and called Mission schools. Their main goal was to Christianize the people during which the practice of Indian languages and cultures in school was strictly forbidden. Eventually the policy makers saw mission schools as ineffective because they were not successful in totally obliterating the Native language and culture of their students. Although it was harshly discouraged, students would still speak their language in the home and practice the culture to whatever extent possible. The influence of the American Indian parents and home life was deemed detrimental. The following citation in 1885 by a superintendent of Indian schools and cited in (Snasz, 1977, p. 38) sums up his promotion of boarding schools over mission schools with the following statement:

> The barbarian child of barbarian parents spends possibly six of the twenty-four hours of the day in a schoolroom. Here he is taught the rudiments of the books varied, perhaps, by fragmentary lessons in the good manners of the superior race to which his teacher belongs. The day school gives to the Indian child useful

information, but does not take him from the teepee into the house and teach him to appreciate, by experiencing them, the comforts of the White man's civilization.

Although Mission schools continued to exist, the majority of students were eventually sent to boarding schools. Almost all boarding schools were far removed from the student's homes and family and continued the assimilationist philosophy of the mission schools but with a military format in place of a religious format.

Boarding Schools

Since the presence of the parents and extended family were deemed detrimental to the children's assimilation into the dominant culture, boarding schools were created so students could be isolated and remade into an image that met approval with the dominant culture. The legacy of non- reservation American Indian boarding schools can be traced to the ideals of a former cavalry officer by the name of Captain Richard Henry Pratt. Later in his career, while in charge of incarcerated Indians, he developed his notion of "assimilation through total immersion" (Smith, 2003. p.15). Pratt differed from his colleagues in that he believed that there were no innate genetic differences in American Indians, but that environment was the explanation for all of human nature (p.16).

Former army officer Pratt had another motto, which was, "kill the Indian and save the man" (Ing, 1991 p.80). He developed the first reservation boarding school of which the first residents were prisoners of war. This school became known as Carlisle Boarding School. Within thirty years of Carlisle's opening nearly five hundred boarding schools were in operation within the United States. The majority of these schools were far from the student's home and were controlled by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).

These schools were run with government funds that were completely inadequate; an average of "nine cents a day was spent to provide for the students" (Szasz, 1977, p.11). Because of the inadequate funding, children were forced to labor to support the school and students were also "leased out" during vacation times to work as domestic servants or laborers to local White families. This part of the boarding school program strongly reinforced the concept of the appropriateness of menial labor for American Indian people and was named the "outing program" (Child, 2000, p.81).

It was originally the idea of Richard Pratt, and became a trademark of the Carlisle Boarding School. In time, many boarding schools maintained this program and considered it an effective tool in teaching Indians skills and qualities they "lacked" such as "thrift, industry, proper family life, and an immersion in the English language" (Ellis, 1987, p. 256). What followed were years of forced attendance at boarding schools for many generations. Children as young as six were forced to attend boarding schools until they were sixteen years old. The schools were often so far away that children could not even go home for the summer. Even if parents were able to travel the long distance, they were discouraged from visiting their children (Smith, 2003).

The schools had some differences, but their main focus was a military style format with a curriculum that consisted of working half the day and academic instruction the other half of the day (Smith, 2003). This model was implemented to prepare American Indians so they could become servants or hold other low status jobs in the American work force.

> Boys and girls were required to do what was considered gender appropriate and menial labor, as related by a former student at Fort Spokane boarding school; some of the boys were detailed to the garden, others were detailed to milk and care for the cows, feed the pigs and chickens and look after the horses, besides doing other chores. There was a large barn on the place, and the boys learned a lot about farming on a small scale. But for boys who had ambitions for becoming something else, Fort Spokane was far from being adequate (Marr, 2000. p.3).

It took many years before any concern was raised by Caucasian Americans in regards to the terrible conditions at boarding schools. It wasn't until the late 1920s that some boarding schools and mission schools were phased out largely due to lack of support, American Indian self-determination, and the findings of the Merriam report in 1928.

A Critical Report

This report was developed because it was obvious to even the most casual observer that there were major economic, social, health, and educational problems in Indian communities. In 1926, the Secretary of the Interior demanded an investigation and report on the status of American Indian communities by a non-governmental agency. The Meriam Report was conducted by the Brookings Institution and was published in 1928 (Huff, 1997).

This report condemned the poor quality and inadequate services provided by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the results of previous and current government policies which had resulted in American Indians losing their lands, their personal freedom, and

sinking further into poverty and despair. The education section of the report pointed out the shocking conditions in boarding schools and recommended that elementary age children not be sent to boarding schools and urged an increase in day schools for American Indians.

The Meriam report found boarding schools to be "…overcrowded, the sanitation inadequate, the children undernourished, overworked and severely disciplined, and the staff unaccredited and poorly paid." The report recommended many reforms including an end to the standardized BIA curriculum which stressed solely the cultural values of mainstream society. In time the number of boarding schools decreased significantly. In the years between 1933 and 1941 over 100 day schools were built across the country. This began a long history of an increase in American Indian student's attendance at public schools, day schools, and decades, later tribally run schools (as cited in Snasz, 1977, p. 38).

Background on Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has a long and often bitter relationship with American Indians, with multiple issues, but this chapter will focus on the educational issues that are paramount. This agency has been viewed by many as a disgrace, perceived by Indians and non-Indians alike as an "inefficient, overly bureaucratized, paternalistic organization" (as cited in Snyder- Joy, 1995, p.21). Even as early as 1911, the Society of American Indians called for the abolishment of the BIA as a solution to the "Indian problem" (Patterson, 2002). The tension between the BIA, the tribes, and Congress has

increased significantly since the sixties as American Indian self-determination started to grow in strength.

The BIA was created in 1824 and was a part of the war department under the Secretary of War, John C. Calhoun (Sharpes, 1979). Its original purpose was to administer Indian schooling, negotiate and regulate treaties, and administer Indian trade. With the BIA being a component of the federal government, it was and continues to be influenced by Presidential and congressional pressures. The early role of the BIA under President Andrew Jackson in the 1830s did not focus much energy on American Indian educational issues but was focused on removing American Indians to west of the Mississippi, as they were viewed as being detrimental to white settlement and civilization.

Changes occurred in 1849 when congress moved the BIA office from the War Department to the Department of the Interior. The BIA's focus at this time became the assimilation of American Indians into mainstream society and the main vehicle for this change would be colonial education.

Over the decades there have been multiple changes and restructuring with the BIA. So many changes have occurred over the decades that a whole book with charts would need to be written to provide a full understanding of this agency.

The following changes in organization and terminology are important to note to prevent confusion. The term Commissioner of Indian Affairs was changed to Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs under the Department of the Interior in 1977. The first American Indian Assistant Secretary was appointed by President Nixon. Since this time,

all Assistant Secretaries have been American Indians from various tribes across the nation. Previously the vast majority of Assistant Secretaries had been non-Indian. Another important change is that the Office of Indian Education was restructured and renamed in 2006 to the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). The director of this agency is in charge of all educational functions within the Interior Department (U.S. Department of the Interior, 2017).

Since the educational component of the BIA was restructured, one would assume that it would be more effective. However, it is still a massive, complicated agency, which many find to be inefficient and unreliable, in providing the services it is supposed to provide.

The following paragraphs describe one example of BIE inefficiency (Gerald Danforth, personal communication, 4/1/13). In 2000, when Gerald Danforth was Chairman of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin, a problem had been brought to his attention by community members and his own evaluation of the Higher Education Department of the Oneida Nation. The problem was that many students who had attended and graduated from the tribal school, which is a BIE grant school, or who had attended one of the neighboring public schools, were dropping out of colleges they attended after high school graduation. Upon returning to the reservation, students often related that their reason for dropping out was that they felt uncomfortable and out of place at school. Chairman Danforth believed that was most likely true, but that academics may also be part of the problem. Considerable tribal money had been spent on the tribal schools and supporting educational programs, so he was looking for answers to the drop out concerns.

The BIE visits the tribal schools semi-annually to track and monitor the progress of the schools and the Oneida Schools were often receiving BIE awards in academic excellence. If the Oneida schools were receiving BIE awards, then why were so many Oneida students dropping out of college?

In seeking an answer to this problem, Chairman Danforth requested from BIE representatives the test scores of students who attended the tribal schools in science, math, and reading. This information was requested of the BIE officials on their semi-annual inspection of Oneida Schools. The BIE responded that they did not track the requested test scores. The chairman then made the same request to Seymour High School, which has a significant American Indian student population. Within seven days, he received the test results. The scores of America Indian students at Seymour were distinctly lower than the non-Indian population. The results varied by grade, but between 5%- 15% on average, American Indian student's grades were lower in the three subjects. Low test scores for American Indian students is a common problem across the nation and a solution has yet to be accomplished. That said, what type of assessment or standards the BIE uses to track academic achievement is a question that needs further investigation.

Commissioners and Superintendents of BIA Schools

Another group of people that had significant influence on the direction of American Indian education were the Commissioners of Indian Affairs and the superintendents or directors of Indian education. These individuals were responsible for all the Federal Indian schools whether they were boarding schools or day schools.

The majority of federal employees subscribed to the assimilationist view that was previously mentioned in this chapter. Estelle Reel, who was the superintendent of Indian schools from 1898 to 1910, was the first woman to be appointed to a position that needed Senate approval. Like many others of her time she believed that the "colored races" were inferior in all ways to the Caucasian race. In her words, "allowing for exceptional cases, the Indian child is of lower physical organization than the white child of corresponding age…" (as cited in Lomawaima, 2002, p.6)

She was a suffragist, who, in spite of her racist views, was responsible for a temporary reverse in part of the assimilationist agenda in the federal schools when she implemented arts and crafts courses into the boarding school curriculum. In these courses, economically viable crafts such as basketry and rug weaving were taught by Native women. Ms. Reel felt tribes whose crafts were still flourishing, especially crafts produced by women's labor, should be maintained as an important economic resource for Indian families and communities. This course of study did not survive past her retirement because "instruction by Native women inevitably brought girls into contact with the kind of tribal women whose authority and respectability the schools were trying to undermine" (Lomawaima, 2002, p.7).

John Collier, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1933-1945

As previously stated, most federal employees were assimilationists and many believed that American Indian people were racially inferior. The first Commissioner of Indian Affairs who was an exception to this mindset was John Collier. He worked extensively and confronted continual opposition to his anti-assimilationist goals.

President Franklin Roosevelt appointed him shortly after he was elected President and his progressive ideas reflected those of President Roosevelt. Collier believed that Indian Education should be community based and stress the values of American Indians. He was against the standardized curriculum in use at the time and was a proponent of progressive education.

It is evident from the study of Collier's life and work that he was an ardent opponent of the forced assimilation of American Indians. He believed that the traditional cultures of the American Indians were superior to the culture in mainstream society. He believed the Great Depression of 1930 was one example of the failure of American mainstream culture. This belief is made evident in one of his writings where Collier states, " They had what the world has lost, and the world must have again, lest it die" (as cited in Rusco, 1991, p.50).

As Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Collier worked to promote his anti-assimilationist views and policies and to protect American Indians rights and resources. He was successful in some ways, an example being his directive to all superintendents decreeing that interference with American Indian religious life or ceremonial expression would no longer be the norm (Snasz, 1999). He was also successful in developing school curriculum and cross cultural teacher training in federal schools. The Indian Reorganization Act and the Johnson O' Malley Act were passed through his initiative and he was able to promote the shift from sending students to off reservation boarding schools to sending greater numbers to public schools or day schools (Huff, 1997).

There were many reasons that Collier's policies were not fully implemented. "Old guard employees" who disagreed with cross cultural training and changes in curriculum policies resisted and stayed with their old way of teaching. Congressional opposition, a lack of proper funding, and tribal resistance contributed to undermining Collier's policies. Tribal resistance was usually due to misinformation and mistrust as a result of previous federal actions (Rusco, 1991). Collier's reform efforts were also cut short by World War II, which had a significant impact on American Indian Education.

After Collier's retirement the following Commissioners of Indian Affairs were of a wide and varied range over the course of decades. But all had one thing in common in that they all subscribed to the assimilationist views of the pre Collier administration.

World War II

The onset of America's involvement in World War II made sweeping changes across the world and nation. This event also inspired changes that affected American Indians in general and Indian education in particular. The onset of the war led to the curtailing of many educational initiatives, such as curriculum development and teacher training, due to loss of funding and the war time budget. Besides losing funding the BIA experienced a severe loss of key employees as multitudes were leaving the bureau to report for military duty (Snasz, 1999).

The war also affected the enrollment of students as the enrollment in all types of public schools, day schools and boarding schools experienced a 12 percent drop from 1941 to 1946. Many young American Indian men joined the military, the marines in particular, even before the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor (Snasz, 1999).

Many males and females left the reservation and boarding schools to find war time employment in urban areas. Some came to be comfortable in an urban setting and were no longer interested in returning to the reservation. This migration to the urban areas also increased the number of American Indian students attending public schools.

Many veterans, after having served in the military, gained a world view and were no longer content to blindly accept the directives of the federal government. By serving in the military, they also gained an appreciation of the positive difference the proper training or schooling can make in an individual's life.

Of the more than five hundred tribes served by the BIA, the Navajo have the largest population and are also one of the most remote tribes, with their vast population spread out over three states. Prior to the war, the Navajo were very isolated and preferred to keep to themselves and were very resistant to having their children attend schools. The Navajo were so resistant that many parents would hide their children from the police and Indian agents when they came around to enforce children's attendance at school (Ellis, 1987).

Navajo veterans returning from the war influenced their people in regards to the positive aspects of education and provided leadership to their people in demanding that the federal government provide education to the people as required by treaty obligation. In 1946 the Navajo tribal chairman argued before the Senate Committee of Indian Affairs that "We need schools so our children can compete with other children" (as cited in Lomawaima, 1995). Instead of providing the day schools that were requested, Congress responded by sending Navajo children to boarding schools in distant states. This action

being an example, of the tensions between the tribes and Congress, and the often coercive efforts inflicted upon the tribes.

Termination

The termination era was from 1945-1960, until it was finally eliminated by President Richard Nixon in 1970 (Szasz, 1999). Termination officially known as House Concurrent Resolution 108 was introduced and primarily supported by conservative politicians. In 1953, the termination program's main goal was to sever the trust relationship between American Indian tribes and the Federal government, and to end the sovereign rights of American Indian nations. The trust relationship was established by the hundreds of treaties that were signed between American Indian tribes and the United states government. In exchange for the millions of acres of land given up by the tribes they were promised education, health care, and economic infrastructure.

Termination had four key goals:

- Repealing laws that “discriminated” against Indians and gave them a different status from other Americans;
- Disbanding the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and transferring its duties to other federal and state agencies or to tribes themselves;
- Ending federal supervision of individual Indians;
- Ending federal supervision and trust responsibilities for Indian tribes (University of Alaska Fairbanks, n.d.)

Termination was pushed forward by the pro assimilationist policy makers during the cold war. According to Kelly (2010) and Burt (1986), during the cold war any

program that promoted cultural pluralism or appeared to conflict with national unity were viewed with suspicion. Many policy makers were uncomfortable with the communal state of tribal properties and the communal values of American Indian culture, because they equated these beliefs with communism. The termination of tribes was another bureaucratic effort to force assimilation upon tribes and acquire their land and resources. Most often money was the driving issue, as the Federal government was always looking for ways to cut expenditures in the budget, and the termination of tribes would eventually reduce and eliminate the Federal budget for all American Indian agencies.

The popular rhetoric of the policy makers used to describe and support termination was "Indians were not removed but liberated from their reservations; not deprived of federal protection but unburdened from paternalism. Reservations were not homelands but prisons" (Kelly, 2010 p.352). Supporters of termination worked hard to convince other policy makers that termination was a policy of liberation. They used natural rights language and terms similar to those previously stated to convey this. The following is an excerpt from the act:

> Whereas it is the policy of Congress, as rapidly as possible, to make the Indians within the territorial limits of the United States subject to the same laws and entitled to the same privileges and responsibilities as are applicable to other citizens of the United States, to end their status as wards of the United States, and to grant them all of the rights and prerogatives pertaining to American citizenship (Kelly, 2010 p.359).

The use of language such as “privileges”, “responsibilities”, and “entitled”, positioned this act as granting liberty and freedom to tribes rather than conveying the true motives of termination. In truth, termination removed American Indian tribes, and their lands, from protected status, thus making it easy for land to be lost to individual sales and vulnerable to corporate control.

Many tribes were against termination from the beginning, and as more American Indians became aware of the true ramifications of termination, the resistance grew in strength. Pro sovereignty/anti-termination became a rallying point and platform for self-determination and promoted nation building and American Indian pride. The negative factor was that so much energy was dedicated to fighting termination, or in the case of the BIA, attempting to manage the termination program, that educational issues and initiatives were almost totally neglected (Szasz, 1999).

A case in point is the experience of the Choctaw Nation in the 1950s. The Choctaw situation was made more difficult because the Chief was selected by presidential decree rather than by heredity or tribal election, as is common in most tribes. The Chief was the only tribal official and there was no tribal infrastructure or adequate tribal government. Like many tribes, massive unemployment and poverty were the norm. At this time, the Choctaw Chief was Harry Belvin and he was a proponent of assimilation. Being pro assimilation, he was quick to promote and misrepresent termination to his tribal members as a form of economic relief (Lambert, 2007). When promoting termination to his tribe, he never called it termination, but focused only on certain factors of termination. With termination the economic wealth of the tribe would

be dispersed to individual tribal members in the form of individual checks. This was very appealing to most because they were looking at the prospect of ready money, without realizing that they would be severing their trust relationship with the federal government.

According to Lambert (2007), it wasn't until 1969, one year before termination was to be final, that a few tribal members realized that termination for their tribe was imminent. Feelings of betrayal and anger towards Chief Belvin were prevalent among the young urban Choctaws. What happened next was a small grass roots resistance group that grew into a massive resistance effort, which eventually overthrew the upcoming termination plans. Increased political awareness and a belief that the Choctaw did not want their tribe to be only remembered in the past tense led to nation building and the forming of a more proper tribal government.

What happened among the Choctaw is just one story among many, but termination and the threat of termination initiated many changes in Indian country. From 1945-1960, "109 American Indian Nations were terminated and over a million acres of land were removed from protected trust status" (Kelly, 2010 p. 9). Some tribes, such as the Menominee, were able to reestablish their tribal status, but the battle these terminated tribes had to engage in to regain their tribal status was often lengthy and time consuming. While the battle for tribal identity promoted self-determination, it was also an expenditure of energy and resources that could have been better spent on nation building issues, such as education.

The Relocation Program

As discussed earlier, the advent of World War II caused many American Indian people to leave the reservation in search of war time employment in the urban areas. Some came to be comfortable in an urban setting and were no longer interested in returning to the reservation. This migration to the urban areas increased the number of American Indian students attending public schools. This migration also led to an increase in American Indian activism as American Indians observed how other people of color organized to pursue a better life. The Red Power movement (Deloria, 1975) was established by American Indians who had relocated to urban areas. This migration was voluntary and was the choice of the individuals involved. Many of the participants in my research had their education affected by migration or relocation to urban settings.

After World War II the relocation program was established, while voluntary, the proponents of this program often misrepresented the realities of relocation to the tribes. The following will explain the relocation program and how it was administered by the BIA.

The Indian Relocation Act was established in 1952 and was administered by the BIA (Philip, 1985). Relocation was a federal strategy affiliated with termination as it occurred during the same time frame as termination and its true goal was assimilation. The BIA administered relocation as a recruitment program and many American Indians left the reservation after being enticed with hopes of good jobs and housing assistance in many major cities such as Los Angeles, Chicago, and Denver. In reality the relocation

program was under funded by Congress, which led to American Indians being housed in slums, and if jobs were acquired they were often low paying temporary jobs.

These disappointing conditions often led to people returning to the reservation by whatever means possible. So many people returned to the reservation, which led to criticism of the BIA for their poor management of the program. Rather than strive to make improvements in the program, they continued to push relocation. To save their agency from criticism the BIA ceased keeping records on the attrition rate of the relocation program.

Initially, relocation was used as a mechanism to depopulate the reservations and accomplish American Indian assimilation as swiftly and inexpensively as possible. As asserted by Burt (1986), once American Indians moved off the reservation they were no longer eligible for services, so in effect, relocation was a form of individual termination.

Criticism of the relocation program intensified in the late 1950s and some positive change occurred in 1960s when the Democrats took over the White House and increased their strength in Congress. The Relocation program was renamed Employment Assistance and it placed emphasis on job training and education. This led to a less controversial program which attained more approval among American Indians and their supporters. According to Burt (1986), "by 1986 over 10,000 American Indians were relocated each year" (p.95).

Even though relocation accomplished their goal of relocating many American Indians to urban settings, it was still seen as a failure by many because it did not increase cultural assimilation and those that did stay in the cities were only slightly better off

economically than their reservation counterparts. Relocation did work for some but it usually worked for those who already possessed job skills and were already more assimilated (Philip, 1985).

One effect of relocation was that it increased American Indian self- determination as the Red Power movement grew in stature. The American Indian Movement (AIM) was started in 1968 in Minneapolis, Minnesota (Deloria, 1975). One of AIM's accomplishments in Minneapolis was to create an alternative school called Heart of the Earth Survival School. This school was established as an alternative educational setting in response to perceived racism in the public school system. This school promoted American Indian culture and activism within an academic institution (Minnesota Historical Society, 2017).

Public Schools

Some American Indian children were already attending public schools before 1891 but it wasn't until the 1030s that the federal government began to officially contract with states for students to attend public schools. The number of American Indian students attending public schools would continue to rise over the following decades. The time frame that American Indians began attending public schools would vary by state and region and their reception in public schools would also vary based on location.

In some states American Indians were treated more favorably, as in western Montana near the Flathead reservation. American Indian children had been attending public schools since the mid-1800s and their presence was an accepted local practice (Szasz, 1999). In other states American Indian students were not welcome at public

schools and some states enacted ordinances against American Indians and other ethnic groups attending public schools. The state of California, Political code 662 (1924) was one example of the negative reception experienced by American Indians and other ethnic groups in public schools. This political code stated that:

> The governing bodies of the school districts shall have power to exclude children of filthy or vicious habits, or children suffering from contagious or infectious diseases, and also to establish separate schools for Indian children, and for children of Chinese, Japanese or Mongolian heritage (as cited in Huff, 1997, p.5).

Even without enacting ordinances it is not hard to imagine how difficult it must have been for American Indian students attending schools where they were not welcome. The Snyder Act of 1921 was enacted to assist in reducing state resistance to American Indian children's attendance at public schools. This Act provided funds to public schools that enrolled American Indian children (Huff, 1997). This Act would be the first of many Acts which were implemented to assist American Indian children attending public schools (See Appendix).

One would think that whether a child attends a public school would not be a complex situation. With American Indian children there were many factors to be considered that influenced where American Indian children attended school. Many states and local governments resisted American Indian children attending public schools if their schools were mainly funded by property tax revenues. The school district would not receive revenue for accepting American Indian children that lived on the reservation because the reservation land base is not taxable. Low income white children whose

parents did not own land or homes were accepted at public schools, so once again the issue of race and racism came into play. Also American Indian children were not citizens until 1924 so their status as non-citizens were a negative consideration by many states and local governments. Besides racism and monetary factors there were often tensions between the state and the federal government as to whose responsibility it was to provide education for American Indian children.

The number of American Indian children attending public schools would continue to grow through the decades. The greatest increase in American Indian public school enrollment occurred between 1930 and 1970 with 65% of American Indian students attending public schools by 1970 (Szasz, 1999). Today the majority of American Indian children attend public schools which take them out of the jurisdiction of the BIE but leave them susceptible to state and federal initiatives and standards.

There were many reasons that the American Indian student population shifted from federal schools to public schools. The findings of the Meriam report turned public opinion against the practices of boarding schools and the BIA leadership in the 1930s and later promoted public education for Indian students. World War II caused a shift in the American Indian population to urban areas which in turn increased the number of American Indians attending public schools. Other practices of the BIA such as termination and relocation would increase the urban Indian population. It is unfortunate that American Indian students would come to experience the same difficulties in public schools as they did in federal schools.

The shortcomings of public education would eventually be identified in the Kennedy and Indian Nations at Risk reports. Although these reports are now dated, as stated by R. St. Germaine (1995), the problems that were identified are still in existence in many public schools and federal schools, and the recommended changes were not implemented in many schools. If the recommendations had been, we would not have today the problems of low American Indian academic achievement and high American Indian student dropout rates.

A National Tragedy-A National Challenge

The committee that conducted the Kennedy Report was formed under the leadership of Senator Robert Kennedy in 1968. Senator Robert Kennedy so strongly believed that federal policies regarding American Indians were a tragedy that needed to be addressed, that he formed the Kennedy Report Committee which was composed of non-Indian politicians and educational administers. The purpose of this committee was to study and report the state of Indian education and to make recommendations for improvements in Indian education. I will describe the Committee findings of the Kennedy Report below.

The statistics of the time in regards to the American Indian situation, pointed to the American Indian poverty rate, unemployment rate, dropout rate, and self-image as being in a dismal state. This report studied the situation in the federal schools and the public schools and found alarming inadequacies. These inadequacies, were considered as evidence, by the committee, for the poor social and economic position of the American Indian in American society.

As part of this report, opportunities for American Indians to be interviewed and to provide testimony in regards to their educational experiences were conducted in multiple reservations, American Indian communities, and at conferences. As part of the field work there were multiple visits by committee members to federal schools and public schools to observe and gather data as well as personal and professional testimonies.

A partial list of the inadequacies of the federal schools operated by the BIA is as follows: (Kennedy Report, 1969)

- The schools are underfunded and in poor condition.
- The performance of staff in these schools is deficient, teachers are untrained, have low expectations for their students and still see their goal as "civilizing the Native."
- The school environment is strict, rigid, and has an overemphasis on discipline.
- Elementary aged children are still being placed in boarding schools in spite of previous congressional rulings against this practice.
- Indian parents and community have no input and are unwelcome in the school.

The situation for American Indian students in public schools was also deemed very negative by this report. The report found multiple inadequacies and problems. The following is a partial list of some of the findings of the report: (Kennedy Report, 1969)

- School administration and teachers believed American Indian students were inferior and expected them to fail. This in turn became a self-fulfilling situation as the students in turn came to believe they were inferior.

- Curriculum used to depict American Indians was often absent and when present was inaccurate and derogatory.
- The schools had no supplemental services to meet the needs of American Indian students and did not even acknowledge that there were special needs.
- American Indian parents had no control or any input into the school administration.
- The Johnson O'Malley funds that were provided by the government to meet the needs of American Indian students in the schools were not being used for that purpose but were used in the general operating purposes of the school.

In summary the report states that, "organization and administration of the BIA school system could hardly be worse. It is clear that the recommendations of the Meriam Report were not taken seriously by those who were in a position of authority to make much needed changes." (Kennedy Report, 1969) It is fortunate that this report was conducted and that the findings had to be published to prove that the Meriam Reports recommendation were not implemented. American Indian voices were heard, which is important, but there was minimal to no American Indian involvement in the authorship of this report. The committee that researched and directed this report was mainly non-Indian politicians and administrators. In future reports, American Indian voices would be heard and the research would be conducted by American Indian people. The report Indian Nations at Risk is an example of this change and will be examined later.

Presidential Influences

Throughout history the President of the United States would directly or indirectly influence American Indian policy in all areas including education. The positions of Commissioner and Superintendent of the BIA was one way that the President influenced Indian education. The President would appoint individuals that reflected his own principles and beliefs to these positions and other positions within the federal government. The actions of the President were often influenced by whether the President supported or even understood the trust relationship between the United States and the tribes.

Under Andrew Jackson in the 1830s, very little attention was paid to Indian education as Jackson's main goal was to uproot as many nations as possible and move them to the west of the Mississippi. The majority of the Presidents until the election of Franklin Roosevelt were like minded in regards to Indian education.

Many positive changes were implemented under President Franklin Roosevelt's administration, one of the first being his appointment of John Collier as commissioner of the BIA in 1933. Another positive influence was the appointment of John Ryan as director of Indian education. Both men were proponents of progressive education and worked hard to make positive changes in Indian education.

President Reagan was elected in 1981 and the Indian policy that was set in motion by his administration was detrimental to the nation, especially Indian country, as he worked to eliminate the War on Poverty programs of the previous administrations. It was made clear to Indian country by his public statements that he did not understand or

believe in the federal government's responsibility to American Indian nations (Szasz, 1999). In response to the negative effects of Reaganomics on American Indian self-determination, Roger Buffalohead addressed the situation by stating "the tragic flaw in the Indian self-determination consensus is that there is so little actual Indian self-determination in Indian country because the consensus rides on the destiny of national political and economic trends rather than on the will or needs of Indian people" (as cited in Szasz, 1999, p.212). The tensions between Congress and the tribes relaxed to a more tolerable degree under George H. Bush but no significant changes occurred to offset the negative stance established by Reagan.

In 1992, Bill Clinton was elected to the presidency, having received strong support from Indian country. The strong support he received was a direct result of the previous Republican administrations lack of rapport with American Indian tribes. In the second year of his presidency the Clinton administration invited over three hundred tribes to meet with the President and Vice-President for a three-day education summit at the White House. This summit was historic in that American Indian voices had never before been solicited in such a prestigious venue.

Shortly after the tribal leaders had left Washington, the effects of the 1994 elections were felt. This election was a Republican landslide which resulted in a Republican dominated House of Representatives. The proposed budget cuts by the House were designed to annihilate the Office of Indian Education, which resulted in massive protests and lobbying by Indian leaders. Disaster for Indian Education was narrowly averted when Clinton vetoed the proposed budget cuts. This near disaster is an example

of the power plays and tensions between the President, Congress, and tribal leaders. Not only the direction but in this case the very existence of American Indian education was at stake.

Sovereignty and Trust Relationship

In (Giroux, 2000) sovereignty is defined as "the right of a people to self-government, self-determination, and self- education. Sovereignty includes the right to linguistic and cultural expression according to local languages and norms and the right to write, speak, and act from a position of agency." (p. xv) According to (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002)," complete independence is not a requirement of sovereignty as few nations today are completely autonomous and independent of outside influences".

This special relationship that American Indian tribes have with the federal government is misunderstood and often disregarded by many people, including congressional, presidential groups and individuals. American Indians are unique from other ethnic groups in that their status as sovereign nations have been established by the 374 treaties the United States has brokered with American Indian Nations. American Indians are unique from other ethnic groups in that their standing as sovereign nations has been established by government-to-government treaties between the United States and specific Indian tribal governments. With the signing of each treaty the Indian tribe typically gave up land and certain privileges, and in return certain commitments were made by Congress to provide specific services to the tribes. Typically, education and health care, were the most consistent factors included in the treaties. It is obvious by the sad state of Indian education and health care over the centuries and into the present day,

that the federal government has not fulfilled its obligations (trust responsibilities) established by treaties.

Since the 1960s and 1970s American Indians have become stronger in protecting their sovereignty rights and holding Congress accountable to honor the obligations established by treaties. There have been many times that Congress has tried different measures to abrogate the treaties which have been unsuccessful so far, since treaties are held to be the highest law of the land in the US constitution. Numerous laws have confirmed and detailed the trust relationship between the United States and the Federal Government. Some examples are the "Trade and Intercourse Acts of 1790, 1793, 1796, 1802 and 1834" (National Indian Education Association, 2010). Most recently the No Child Left Behind Act, section 7101 of Title VII, reconfirms and promises to fulfill the trust responsibility and educational responsibilities of the federal government to American Indian tribes (National Indian Education Association, 2016).

Many attacks on American Indian sovereignty and non-fulfillment of the trust responsibility occur when Congress cuts or proposes to cut beneficial educational programs or not fund or adequately fund such programs. Numerous American Indian tribes, associations and individuals are constantly monitoring and prepared to implement counter measures whenever it is needed. During a funding crisis in the 1990's Marilyn Oshie Dorr, the Minnesota Chippewa Tribal Director for the JOM programs stated:

> As sovereign Nations we must continually work to protect our trust responsibility and treaty obligations for future generations of our Indian Nations. Indian Nations must become change drivers. This must become a collaborative and cooperative

relationship among Indian Nations. We will never surrender our sovereign rights. We must stand strong and united. (as cited in Snasz, 1999, p.209)

Summary of Chapter One

This first chapter addressed how the Bureau of Indian Affairs, initiatives worked against American Indian self- determination and sought to push their agenda of assimilation. The BIA has followed presidential and congressional directives to force assimilation of American Indian tribes, often under the guise of programs or projects. The use of mission and boarding schools as an instrument of assimilation is one example that had a detrimental effect on American Indian tribes.

World War II was discussed as a mixture of positive and negative factors, the negative being the loss of staff, students, and resources to the war effort. The positive aspects included that the large number of service men and women who returned home after serving had gained a world view and were no longer content to blindly accept the directives of the federal government. By serving in the military they also gained an appreciation of the positive difference that proper training and schooling can make in an individual's life.

It was described how the President could influence policy that affected American Indian tribes. Many Presidents were indifferent or hostile to American Indian people, but there were some who implemented policy that was beneficial to American Indian tribes. Examples are President Nixon, who in 1970, called an end to the termination program, and spoke in support of self-determination (Szasz, 1999). Another was President Clinton, who in the second year of his presidency invited over three hundred tribes to meet with

him and the Vice-President for a three-day education summit at the White House. The Obama administration has thus also very supportive of tribal initiatives and he was well supported by the majority of Indian country. An analysis of his administration is beyond the scope of this paper to address.

Chapter Two: American Indian Self Determination- Resistance as Empowerment

During the last six decades there has been a wide range of self- determination initiatives including the issues of economics, natural resources, reclamation of land, land usage, language, religion, identity, and education. Freedoms that many take for granted, are rights that Indigenous people have had to continuously fight for. The following quote stated by (Otis, 1972), best describes this situation;

> The Indian has rejected the American educational system because it first rejected him: Indians have desired education, but within a system that includes the home and community in the educational process. It is through this process that Indian children learn their tribal language, custom, tradition, religion, and philosophy. If the Native American Indian appears to be apathetic about supporting the efforts of his children to succeed in school, it is not because of hostility to the educational process, but rather because of his rejection of the narrowness of the system that controls the education process. (as cited in B. Bielenberg, 2000.p.2)

Since American Indian self-determination in general is beyond the scope and purpose of this chapter, self-determination as it pertains to American Indian education will be the main focus. The growth of tribally run schools, colleges, charter schools, and other educational programs has emerged as American Indian tribes sought to develop and control their own educational systems. They fought and continue to fight long standing problems such as low academic achievement and the high dropout rate among high school and college students.

Tensions between American Indian self-determination and opposing forces inflicted upon tribes by federal and state governments will be identified and discussed. Opposing forces include but are not limited to relocation, termination, and the BIE. Presidential and congressional influences often worked in opposition to the best interests of American Indian tribes and unfortunately this continues into the present. Many tribes today spend a lot of time and resources in monitoring, lobbying, and responding to congressional initiatives. Fortunately, the growth of American Indian attorneys and other professionals has assisted in the monitoring of Congress.

The following chapter seek to show how American Indian self-determination had a positive influence on American Indian education and stirred events and initiatives that further inspired American Indian self-determination. These activities are composed of a wide range of complex elements which included resistance and empowerment. Basic background on the Wisconsin Oneida is provided to promote understanding of the Oneida situation. Educational self-determination initiatives of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin will also be provided as examples to increase understanding of this complex issue.

The following chapter will also explain how American Indian tribes have responded to oppositional forces and forged ahead with the development and growth of educational self-determination. By explaining the responses and initiatives of American Indian tribes this chapter will address the following question: What initiatives have been implemented by American Indian tribes to accomplish the goal of educational self-determination and to improve the quality of education for American Indian people?

American Indian Organizations

From the beginning of European and American Indian contact there have been organizations that wished to assist, support, and even protect American Indians from mistreatment by the government and the ever encroaching white population. The Indian Rights Association founded in 1882 (Snasz, 1999) and the American Indian Defense Association are two examples of the many reform groups that were active in the late 1800s. These organizations were composed of white people that had various ideas about how to support and protect American Indian people. But even these organizations were mainly proponents of assimilation and assumed that the American Indian was "vanishing" and would eventually cease to exist as distinct tribes (Patterson, 2002).

One of the first organizations that was established by American Indian people was the Society of American Indians (SAI). The SAI was formed in 1911 with membership consisting of well-educated American Indians from a variety of tribes. This group was founded to provide a venue for American Indian people to speak their mind and publish their views on sovereignty issues and American Indian rights.

Dr. Charles Eastman of the Sisseton Sioux tribe was one of the founding members of this organization. He was educated at Christian boarding schools, Dartmouth and Boston college (Lopenzina, 2003). Besides being a medical doctor, he was renowned for his authorship of many books and articles. Dr. Eastman felt very strongly about the need for American Indian citizenship and conveyed in many speeches and writings how citizenship would benefit the tribes. He believed citizenship would provide political power and economic self- sufficiency to American Indians. He viewed citizenship as a

proper response to the sacrifices and contributions of over 10,000 American Indian servicemen and women to the war effort of World War II.

The Society of American Indians had many goals and statements of purpose. The first goal they focused on in this time period was to "promote citizenship" (Patterson, 2002). American Indians were not citizens of the United States. It wasn't until the American Indian Citizen Act of 1924 that this changed. The overarching principle that influenced this group was sovereignty and American Indian rights. In time, other goals were added such as promoting self- determination in the area of Indian education.

As in many organizations, there were disagreements and variations of opinions in regards to which agenda and stance the SAI should promote. The majority of the well-educated members of SAI were products of various boarding schools and the assimilationist mentality espoused by these institutions, while other members were preservationists and wished to contribute to American society rather than be absorbed by it (Patterson, 2002).

National Congress of American Indians (NCAI)

The second national organization founded by American Indian people from multiple tribes is The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI). The NCAI was founded in 1944 in Denver, Colorado and consisted of at least eighty delegates from fifty different tribes. They initially came together to protect their rights as sovereign nations and to combat the assimilationist agendas of the federal and state governments (Deloria, 1983). Three main resolutions were passed at their first meeting which addressed support

for “sovereignty, civil rights, and political recognition for all Indians” (National Indian Education Association, n.d.).

This organization has grown in strength and influence over the decades and continues to meet quarterly to address a multitude of issues with subcommittees that meet and focus on specific issues that include but are not limited to: economic development, treaty rights, sovereignty, education, environmental, and legal issues. Today, the annual full membership meeting has thousands of attendees from hundreds of tribes and consists of non-Indian and international members and supporters. Often people who attend NCAI may also be members of related organizations such as the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) and the Native American Rights Fund (NARF). For example, as an attendee at both conferences, I have found that the education subcommittee meetings at NCAI are usually coordinated and directed by members of the NIEA.

The National Indian Education Association (NIEA)

The National Indian Education Association (NIEA) was founded in 1969 with the first meeting held in 1970. The NIEA is the oldest and most accomplished national organization which consists of American Indian educators and support staff. The NIEA is the educational counterpart to the NCAI, and there is consistent collaboration between the two organizations and many other associations that have been established over the decades.

NIEA is committed to many initiatives and is composed of multiple subcommittees, but some of their basic goals for 2012 are detailed below:

- to strengthen tribal control of education;

- to invest in cultural and language revitalization;
- to focus on the development and retention of Native teachers, administrators and education leaders;
- to address the needs of all Native students;
- to ensure that the Federal Government fulfills its trust obligation and makes strong investments in Indian Education Programs in the FY 2013 budget (National Indian Education Association, (n.d.)

At the state level there are related organizations that complement NIEA, such as the Minnesota Indian Education Association (MIEA) and the Wisconsin Indian Education Association WIEA). Many individuals that belong to the state organizations also attend and collaborate at the national level and as previously stated, NIEA also collaborates with NCAI and many other effective and prestigious organizations.

Indian Nations at Risk Report (INAR)

The INAR report was formed by a committee of mainly American Indian educators and administrators from multiple tribes working in collaboration with the United States department of education (Force, I.N.A.R.,1991). This report was published in 1991 to address the continued high dropout rate and low academic achievement among American Indians in federal schools and public schools. The INAR committee members believed that this report addressed the educational needs of American Indians and that if their recommendations were followed and fully implemented a positive growth in American Indian academic achievement would occur (Force, I.N.A.R.,1991). A significant difference in regards to this report, in comparison to the Kennedy report, was not so

much in its findings but that a majority of the writers and researchers on this team were American Indian teachers and administrators. Like the Kennedy report this report was very extensive and included multiple site visits, interviews and testimonies. The NIEA and NCAI organizations were critical in providing opportunity for participation by people who were attending the conferences to provide testimony and information to the researchers. According to St. Germaine (1995), some of the main obstacles to American Indian academic achievement were the following:

- limited opportunities to enrich language and developmental skills during preschool years;
- an unfriendly school climate;
- curriculum presented from a purely Western perspective;
- low expectations by teachers;
- a loss of native language ability;
- high drop-out rates:
- a lack of opportunity for parents and communities to develop a real sense of participation (p.33).

The INAR report was responsible for the implementation of a massive reform effort in the mid-1990s (St. Germaine, 1995). The reform efforts included reforms in standards, teacher accountability, and textbooks. As also stated by (St. Germaine, 1995), this reform effort had the most effect in the public schools but unfortunately did not have as much effect on the federally run schools for American Indians. By looking at the list of recommended reforms one can ascertain that many of the needed reforms addressed in

this report had also been noted in the Kennedy report and had not been adequately addressed in the 1970s and the 1980s.

American Indian Low Academic Achievement and High Dropout Rate

The problem of American Indian low academic achievement has been a long standing problem. Being aware of the federal government's role in the education of American Indians one can see how low academic achievement would be a result. The high dropout rate of American Indian students has been problematic since the 1800s and continues to this day. The problems of federal and public school experiences for American Indian students have been documented and outlined in the Meriam Report (1928), the Kennedy Report (1969), and the American Indian Nations at Risk Report (1991). Each report has called for reform, and while change has been slow to come, reforms have been implemented. Much reform has occurred because of tribal initiatives and directives which are discussed in this dissertation.

As discussed previously, American Indian organizations such as the National Indian Education Association, the National Congress of American Indians and the National Indian Gaming Association have been instrumental in driving positive changes in Indian country. Tribal leaders and their supporters continue to seek and develop solutions to this problem. The first part of this section will state the problem and following sections will provide information on alternative schools, charter schools, tribal colleges and other American Indian educational initiatives. Alternative schools, charter schools, tribal schools, and tribal colleges are initiatives that seek to provide solutions to the problems of low academic achievement and high dropout rates among American

Indian students. The educational initiatives of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin, which are very progressive, will also be described.

In the United States, the national low graduation rate and rising dropout rate is of utmost concern to many. Stated in an article by (Bridgelang, Dilulio & Morrison, 2006), the overall graduation rate is stated at 68 to 71%. This means that almost one third of all high school students in public schools fail to graduate. Of those who fail to graduate, a disproportionate number consist of low income, urban, minority, and single parent students who attend large inner city high schools. This problem is widespread across the nation and affects all states and regions.

Although the national dropout rate is alarming, it is even more alarming among the American Indian population. The graduation rate for American Indians in 2006 was 44.1% which is far lower than the national average of 69% for all students and recent data in Education Week, (2009) displays that the dropout rate continues to intensify.

The report by (Faircloth &Tippeconnic, 2010) draws data from seven states that have the highest population of American Indian students and compares the American Indian and non-Indian graduation rates of the states in the study and notes the disparity between the two groups in all the states studied. “The state with the highest level of disparity is South Dakota with an American Indian graduation rate of 30.4% compared to 75.6% for non-Indian” (p.11). Conversations with my friends from tribes in South Dakota have illustrated a very racist attitude towards the tribal communities from the state’s mainstream society. That combined with the high poverty rate of the primary

tribes in South Dakota lead one to not be surprised at a lower than average tribal graduation rate.

The reasons for the high dropout rate among American Indians are many and comprise a multitude of factors as listed in Reyhner, (1991) some school level factors are listed as the following: large schools, a perceived lack of empathy among teachers, lack of motivating teaching methods, irrelevant curriculum, inappropriate testing, and lack of parent involvement.

Student level factors are even more varied, yet the more common ones as listed in Faircloth and Tippeconnic (2010) were a feeling of being unwanted or "pushed out". Other very common reasons were listed as poor attendance, high rates of suspension and expulsion, lack of engagement and motivation, failing classes and poor grades. These are many of the same factors identified in the Indian Nation at Risk Report (INAR, 1991) as areas of needed reform.

BIA/BIE Schools

Like most governments, American Indians view the authority to create and administer educational programs for their citizens, as the key to true educational self-determination. It was stated very well by (O'Brien, 1990, p.20) that "despite history, Indian advocates still think education is the key to the economic survival of their people and are optimistic that improvements will be made" (as cited in Snyder- Joy (1994).

Federal schools operated through contracts with the BIE are "contract schools," and schools funded by grants from the BIE are "grant schools." Institutions directly administered and staffed by BIE employees are "BIE-administered schools" or "BIE

schools" (Snyder-Joy, 1998). BIE schools have much less local control and tribal self-determination than the grant and contract schools. The 1970s showed an increase of contract schools as a direct result of the Indian Self-Determination Act which empowered tribes to contract with the BIE to administer their own schools. An amendment of this Act in 1988 empowered tribes to write and apply for grants to the BIE to administer their own schools.

The grant school has the most autonomy since the grant is written by the tribal education department, and is then approved by the tribal governing body. In most cases the grant is written to include the culture and language of the tribe within the academic fame work of the school. The BIE has some control over grant schools, as it has the authority to accept or decline the grant and also has authority to release the money. While an improvement from BIE administered schools, this situation has often led to tensions between the BIE and the tribes.

Research conducted by Snyder-Joy (1995) measured the perceived level of self-determination in teachers, administrators, and school board members of BIE controlled schools, contract schools, and grant schools. The conclusions of this study were that individuals associated with contract and grant schools perceived a higher level of self-determination or local control in regards to policy and budgetary decisions and school design issues. This study concluded that BIE directed schools were run in a top down administrative manner, while contract and grant schools were more grass roots and exhibited more local control.

While local control is a very positive change, there can be negative factors in some instances. Some tribal schools can be lacking in school board and administrative professionalism. The BIE is supposed to provide training to school boards but it is often lacking and if provided it is not culturally relevant. According to J. Danforth, another negative reality is that school board members, teachers, and administrators are most often products of BIE schools or public schools themselves thus rendering them often unable to provide leadership that would provide positive change that will be both innovative and culturally relevant (J. Danforth, personal communication, 1/25/13). This reality relates to the statement by Paolo Freire which states

> But almost always, during the initial stage of the struggle, the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend themselves to become oppressors, or "sub-oppressors." The very structure of their thought has been conditioned by the contradictions of the concrete, existential situation by which they were shaped. Their ideal is to be men; but for them, to be men is to be oppressors. This is their model of humanity" (Paulo, Freire, 1970).

Tribal schools have the authority to develop and implement their own standards, but according to D. Beaulieu (2006), all have adopted the state educational standards. This relates to a conversation I had with Loretta Metoxen in regards to her thoughts on the development and the curriculum of the Oneida Elementary School. According to Loretta,

> I think it's an effort, but not a good effort. It's not an immersion school. It is enough to acquaint students but it is not enough to become proficient in the

> language and the history. My daughter is a language and culture teacher at the school and she has never been satisfied with the tribe and the administration's efforts to determine their own outcome. They could have at the beginning but they didn't. It is a BIE contract school they are limited. I think they are self-limited. It could have been made an immersion school at the beginning but wasn't. (L. Metoxen Interview, 4/28/14)

A challenging situation that many tribal schools must contend with is a larger number of students who have special needs, and behavior and/or attendance issues. This is due to the fact that many American Indian students are dismissed or suspended from the public schools so often that the tribal schools become their last resort to achieving a diploma (St. Germaine 1995).

In spite of the negatives, the positives are far greater as the number of tribally controlled schools continues to grow. According to Tippeconnic (1995), the school year of 1994/1995 marked the first year that schools controlled by the tribes numbered at 93 were greater than those controlled by the BIE numbered at 92. The following school year showed an even greater increase with tribes controlling 98 schools and the BIE operating 89 schools. Since the 1990s the number of tribally controlled schools has continued to grow.

The school year 2007-2008 showed considerable growth in tribally controlled schools as out of 183 BIE funded elementary and secondary schools, 58 are under BIE operation and 125 schools are tribally controlled. These 183 schools are located in 64 different reservations and provide services to approximately 42,000 students (Bureau of

Indian Education. 2017). During the 2009-10 school years, approximately 8 percent of all American Indian elementary and secondary school students attended 184 BIE-funded schools.

Another positive factor that has contributed to great American Indian educational self-determination is the growth of gaming and other economic tribal ventures. Many tribes, such as the Oneida, have used their own economic resources to assist in funding tribal schools and other educational programs.

Tribal Colleges

According to Brown (2003), "tribal colleges are defined as institutions of higher education that have been formally sanctioned by one or more tribes" (p.36). The typical tribal college incorporates tribal culture, language, and traditions into the academic framework of the school. Classes are smaller and the teachers are considered to be more supportive versus teachers in larger institutions of higher education. The majority of tribal colleges are two year programs but this has been slowly changing as more tribal colleges have become accredited as four year programs.

Tribal colleges were implemented by various tribes to address the issue of tribal members having lack of access to institutions of higher education due to the fact that many tribal reservations are in remote settings. Another reason was the fact that many American Indians were not succeeding academically and were dropping out of college. As Boyer (1997) noted:

> Especially since the enactment of the GI Bill and the Higher Education Act, the federal government, as well as individual colleges and universities, had

> encouraged Indian students to enroll. But as more did, it became clear that access did not guarantee academic success. The dropout rate for American Indians remained at 90 percent or higher at many institutions (p. 25).

Tribal colleges have been highly recommended by American Indian educators such as Ortiz and Heavy Runner (2003) who see tribal colleges as being ideal to assist academically under prepared American Indian college students. The smaller class sizes, availability of remedial courses, and more supportive staff can assist students to make a successful transition to a larger, mainstream four-year program. The fact that tribal colleges are geographically closer to home and family is beneficial too.

The first tribal college was Dine' College established in 1968 by the Navajo tribe. Many tribal colleges will collaborate and obtain support from larger mainstream higher education institutions. Dine' college received assistance from Arizona State University. Arizona State University provided support and collaboration during the planning stages, and provides resources and support staff when needed.

Other tribal colleges have not been so fortunate, and tribes have had to develop tribal colleges on their own. Some states do not see the value in tribal colleges or believe the existing state colleges are adequate to meet the needs of American Indian tribes. The Blackfeet Community College approached the Montana State Board of Higher Education and was denied assistance. According to Stein (1988), "Blackfeet Community College was free to develop under tribal jurisdiction, but the state would not assist in that development nor contribute any fiscal resources" (p. 207).

The growth of tribal colleges has not been an easy road. Before the passage of the Tribally Controlled Colleges Assistance Act of 1978 tribal colleges were consistently underfunded and the main funding was through the BIA using Snyder Act monies and Title III of the Higher Education Act. The main problems with the Title III funding was that it provided short term funding, with five years being the longest availability of funds. An even worse problem with Title III was that this grant was competitive, so tribal colleges could end up competing against each other for funding. The problem with the Snyder Act monies was that the funds were administered by the BIA and this organization was known to be rigid and authoritarian. According to Pease-Pretty On Top (2003)

> The Snyder Act monies demonstrated a couple of things: first, that the federal sources could be used for tribal government's priorities; and second, that the BIA had the legislative authority to create or support model organizations like tribal colleges; and finally, that the BIA did not want autonomous organizations and jerked the funds back and forth each year to show their dislike (p.10).

It wasn't until the Tribally Controlled College Assistance Act of 1978 was passed that funding for tribal colleges improved. This Act was passed after extensive lobbying and promotion by the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) and other supportive agencies such as the National Congress of American Indians and the National Indian Education Association. According to Pease- Pretty On Top (2003), the BIA did not help with getting this act passed, was unsupportive and even worked against its

passage. This is another example of the BIA being out of touch with American Indian educational self-determination.

The number of tribal colleges has grown considerably over the four decades since the founding of the first tribal college, in 1968. Today, according to the (American Indian Higher Education Consortium, 2009), there are "thirty- seven tribal colleges and universities, operating at more than seventy-five sites in fifteen states" (p. 2).

Alternative Schools

Heart of the Earth Survival School (HOTESS) in Minneapolis, Minnesota, was established by the American Indian Movement (AIM) in 1968. The philosophy behind the school's name was that this school was established to teach children to survive in the Whiteman's world and survive as an American Indian. HOTESS was a kindergarten through 12th grade school. As stated previously, the school was established by AIM to provide alternative educational options for American Indian inner-city youth. The school provided academics and also focused on American Indian language, culture, and spirituality. Political activism was a strong component of the school as students were often participants in rallies and protests on a regular basis. I was a Title One reading teacher at this school from 1976 to 1980 teaching reading and math and administering the reading and math lab. Besides my teaching duties I was often chaperoning students at various political and cultural activities.

HOTESS became a charter school in 1999 and was renamed Oh Day Aki. Oh Day Aki is the Ojibwe language equivalent for heart of the earth. Oh Day Aki continued to provide American Indian culture and language along with standard academics.

Unfortunately, in 2008, this school was forced to close due to budgetary discrepancies and allegations of embezzlement of 1.38 million by the director of Oh Day Aki (Star Tribune, 2008).

The Saint Paul counterpart to HOTESS was Red School House (RSH). RSH was established in 1972 and was the second of sixteen survival schools that would eventually be established in the United States. RSH provided culturally based education and similar cultural and political activities as HOTESS. I also worked at RSH as a part time P.E. teacher and my son attended kindergarten at Red School house. As a parent I also served on the board of directors for this school. For decades HOTESS and RSH offered an alternative to the public schools and many students attended these schools and graduated (Minnesota Historical Society, 2012). RSH stayed open until it was closed in 1991 due to fiscal mismanagement.

Another school which opened in the early 70s and is still in operation today is Nawayee Center School. Nawayee started out as a drop in center and over time developed into a 7-12 grade alternative urban high school which is now a contract site for Minneapolis public schools (Center School, 2014) As in other alternative schools, many of the students attending have dropped out or been expelled from the public school system and many are considered at risk.

The mission of Nawayee Center School is as follows:

- Providing accredited junior and senior high school classes
- Promoting chemically free and healthy lifestyles through prevention teachings and monthly activities

- Youth leadership through a joint decision making partnership between staff and students
- Opportunities to develop and strengthen cultural pride through daily practice of positive cultural values
- Small classes that allow students to learn more about their culture such as Ojibwe/Dakota Language, Native Issues, Drum Group, and Outfit Making (Center School, 2014).

The alternative schools mentioned are located in the twin cities. There are many other alternative schools and programs still in operation throughout the nation. Some alternative schools have closed, new ones have opened, and some have converted to charter schools. For those schools that continue operating, according to Jeffries (2012), data reveals that significant factors contributing toward American Indian student success are "(a) small school size, (b) flexible school formats, (c) governance structures, and (d) culturally responsive teachers. These factors, occurring in concert, present the best possible environment for American Indian students to achieve school success" (p.52).

Charter Schools

Writing this section is difficult due to the lack of research that has been conducted on charter schools, especially American Indian charter schools. In searching the internet, the main information available are articles that address charter school scandals or negative publicity. Most negative publicity alleges mismanagement of money or performing poorly academically. In spite of criticism, according to Osborne (2012), charter schools are here to stay. Most charter schools have long waiting lists and have

strong community support. In the last decade the number of charter schools has continued to grow. There are 146 charter schools in Minnesota and 5,600 charter schools are in operation nationally (Osborne, 2012, p 376).

The Center for Education Reform (2000) provides the following definition for a charter school:

> Charter schools are independent public schools, designed and operated by educators, parents, community leaders, educational entrepreneurs and others. They are sponsored by designated local or state educational organizations who monitor their quality and integrity, but allow them to operate freed from the traditional bureaucratic and regulatory red tape that hog- ties public schools. Freed from such micromanagement, charter schools design and deliver programs tailored to educational excellence and community needs. Because they are schools of choice, they are held to the highest level of accountability consumer demand.

As mentioned previously in the section on BIA/BIE schools, change is difficult and positive change takes time to evolve. A common problem in tribal schools, alternative schools, and charter schools is that those who are in positions of authority, such as administrators, school board members and teachers are often products of the public schools or BIE school systems. Being such, they are often unaware of how to truly reform schools. Bielenberg, (2000), wrote that despite the best of intentions, "it is often difficult to change common mainstream educational practices. Rather than simply changing what we teach, it is necessary to look more deeply at how we teach and how we structure the learning environment" (p.133). If these issues are addressed, America Indian

children can be provided with the education they deserve and the education indigenous people, both urban and rural, have been requesting for over a century. A school may incorporate American Indian culture and language into its curriculum, but if the manner of teaching is still teacher driven versus child centered and the school is administered in a typical mainstream top-down fashion, significant positive change will not occur.

According to Lomawaima (1999) the charter school movement is an opportunity for Indian communities to reassert and regain powers of self-determination and self-education especially in urban areas that are often lacking in the support that some reservations can draw upon. As cautioned by Lomawaima (1999) "it will take much more than local control of schools to undo the injustices of the past and unlearn the deeply ingrained 'natural truths' of educating American Indian and Alaskan Native children" (p.3).

The majority of American Indian charter schools are language immersion schools and/ or provide American Indian culture- based education. American Indian magnet schools, alternative schools, and tribal schools are still more common among American Indian populations but the charter school has great potential to provide a positive alternative to public school education.

The Oneidas in Wisconsin -1821 to the present

This section will focus on the Oneida Indians of Wisconsin and their experience in public schools. The following paragraphs will provide background on how the Oneida, whose traditional homeland is in upstate New York, came to be in the state of Wisconsin. This background is important because the research study takes place on the Oneida

reservation in Wisconsin and all of the participants of the study are members of the Oneida tribe.

There are a variety of reasons that the vast majority of Oneidas moved from their homeland in upstate New York in 1821 to settle in Wisconsin. A general misconception often reflected in mainstream history textbooks is that Oneidas, leaving their traditions and culture behind, became Christians and followed a missionary leader to Wisconsin to begin a new life. In reality the reasons for leaving New York homeland are deep rooted and much more complex.

According to Campisi & Hauptman (1998), there were three primary factors influencing the Oneida movement to Wisconsin from New York State. First, there was an influx of settlers moving into the area which was coupled with the state and government's greed for land. Second, the United States government failed to protect the Oneidas from New York's illegal and unscrupulous treaties with the Oneidas and other tribes of the Iroquois confederacy. Finally, religious and political factionalism within the Oneida Tribe made the Oneidas vulnerable to these external pressures.

Soon after the Revolutionary War, external political, religious and business interests continued to mount against the Indian Tribes of the Iroquois Confederacy. Political pressures were exerted by the state of New York and its political leaders to take control of the Oneida land base in New York to make room for the growing European population that was clamoring for Oneida land. Much of this was accomplished by the practice of New York state coercing the Oneida into signing misleading treaties that were instrumental in taking away more of their land base. The natural resources on this land,

mainly in the form of rich timber and farm land, was in demand by many individuals and businesses for the profit that ownership of these resources would entail. Today, Oneida homeland litigations surrounding illegal treaties initiated by the State of New York are still pending in the courts.

The Federal Government, still mindful of the Revolutionary War, was fearful that the Oneida and other Iroquois might join forces with the British in Canada, and therefore turned a blind eye to what New York was doing to move the Oneidas and other tribes to the west. This pressuring of the Oneidas to migrate, was done in spite of the fact that the Oneidas had provided critical support to the Americans in the Revolutionary War. Besides dealing with an ungrateful United States government, the Oneida support for the Americans also led to a split in the once united Iroquois Confederacy like the other tribes who were in support of the British.

In addition, the Oneidas, had become fractionalized among themselves because they had been infiltrated by a religious missionary, who had already achieved a measured success in converting the Oneidas to Christianity. Despite their fractionalized state, they moved in three groups, in this order: The Christian party (Methodist), a second Christian party (Episcopalian), and the pagan party (traditional). All three groups brought with them their language, culture, and traditions to Wisconsin. (J. Danforth, personal communication, 2007).

The federal government at this time had reached the conclusion that "all the Indians in the path of the White advance should be removed further west" (Campisi & Hauptman, 1998, p.65). The state of New York concurred with the federal government's

policies and conclusions. Working together, the federal government and the state of New York continued to pressure the Oneidas into signing treaties that diminished their land base.

As related by Cornelius (1998), the missionaries were in support of the Oneida leaving New York because they saw the influence of the white population as a bad influence on the Oneida people. They were also hopeful that if the Oneida left their homelands that they would also leave their traditions and culture behind. Some missionaries were greedy, and there is evidence of collusion between the War Department, Ogden Land Company and a missionary by the name of Eleazor Williams.

In time, three groups of Oneidas traveled and settled in what is now the Oneida reservation in Wisconsin. The first group of approximately 150 Oneidas to arrive came in 1823, was Episcopalian, and was led by Eleazor Williams. Eventually, more Christian groups of Episcopalians and Methodists arrived and eventually a non-Christian group termed the "pagan party" settled in Oneida. By the fall of 1838, there were 654 Oneidas on the reservation and this number tripled over the next fifty years as arrivals from New York continued to settle in Wisconsin (Campesi, et. al.1998).

In the years to follow, there were prosperous times and times of hardship for the Oneida people. In spite of hardships, the Oneida population continued to grow and in 1887, "there were 1,732 Oneidas on the reservation; of these 700 were reported to be able to use enough English for ordinary conversation, 550 could read English, and 375 were church members" (Campesi, et.al.1998, p.77).

As the Oneida population grew, the Oneida were increasingly surrounded by European population that coveted their lands and did not respect their language and traditions. Out of a need for survival and due to the negative influence of American Indian boarding schools and the churches, the numbers of Oneida people who spoke English continued to increase and the number of Oneidas who spoke their language decreased. This trend, once started, has continued to this day in spite of countermeasures by the tribe to revitalize the Oneida language and culture. Today, the Oneida population has approximately 17,000 enrolled members

The Oneida Nation Educational Initiatives

The Oneida tribe of Wisconsin is an excellent example of self-determination, as they have been very progressive in many economic, social, environmental, judicial, and educational initiatives. There are multiple departments within the Oneida Nation that provide many services. Services are mainly to tribal members, but often may include assistance to other tribes or even non-Indians, depending on the situation and service needed. This section will focus on the educational initiatives of the Oneida tribe.

The Oneida Nation Elementary School

According to Harriet Reiter, administrative assistant at the Oneida elementary school, the Oneida Nation Elementary School was first established in 1979. At this time the school was K-8 and was located in the Norbert Hill Center (NHC). The NHC is located in the center of the Oneida reservation and the building was originally a boarding school, became a seminary, which was later turned over to the tribe. The NHC currently houses offices for the Business Committee and many other tribal government offices and

now includes the Oneida Nation Secondary School (H. Reiter, personal communication, February 5, 2014).

In 1994, the Oneida tribe moved grades K-8 into a new school that was built with tribal funds. It is also called the Turtle School, as it is architecturally formed in the shape of a turtle, and is a state of the art building. Oneida language, culture, music and dance are subjects which are taught as part of the school curriculum. The school is closely aligned with the Oneida community and there is often school wide attendance at longhouse ceremonies, maple sugar camps, and other community events (Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, 2017).

Some Oneida parents do not have their child or children attend the tribal school because they perceive the school as focusing on the culture and neglecting the academics (J. Brocker, personal communication, September 7, 2013). I do not know if the academics are taught in isolation, as is often the case in many schools, or if there has been successful integration of culture and academics as have been done at the American Indian Magnet School in Saint Paul, Minnesota. (Saint Paul Public Schools, 2017).

Another example of needed positive change is the lack of professional boundaries that can exist between the elected tribal council, the school board members, administrators, and even the Oneida Human Resources Department. For example, if a parent or community member doesn't approve of actions by school personnel, they may go to the tribal council and complain to a council member to intervene. Sometimes these interventions do occur even though it is a clear breach of protocol and professionalism.

The Oneida Nation Secondary School

According to Harriet Reiter, the Oneida Nation Secondary school is located in the Norbert Hill Center (NHC) in Oneida and has been there since 1994 (personal communication, February 5, 2013). The Oneida Nation Secondary School opened in the 94-95 school year with a student population of forty-five 9th and 10th graders. In 1999, the high school was expanded to include grades 9 through 12. The typical student population is 70-80 students.

It has been a long standing concern and studies have been conducted that determined that the NHC is far from ideal and unsuitable as a site for a high school given the comingling of office sites that exist in the same building. Many people think that having a high school in a business building is inappropriate. Numerous initiatives have been attempted to improve the situation but budgetary concerns have stifled any changes at this point (J. Danforth, personal communication, January 28, 2013).

Oneida Higher Education Department

The Oneida Higher Education Department has been in existence since 1975 according to Cheryl Van Den Berg, Assistant Director of the department. Since its inception it was under BIA supervision and received federal funding through the office of the BIA. In 1994 self-governance was established which left the Oneida tribe free to direct this program. Because of the many successful economic ventures of the Oneida Nation, 95% of the budget for the Higher Education Department is derived from the tribe and 5% of the budget is administered with federal funds (C. Van Den Berg, personal communication, January 14, 2013).

In 1996, a giant step was taken by the General Tribal Council (GTC). The GTC is comprised of all enrolled Oneidas 21 years or older and each member has a right by tribal constitution to initiate a proposal, providing they follow the process for doing so. Each GTC member also has the right to question and vote for or against each action presented at a GTC meeting. A proposal in support of higher education was initiated by tribal member, John Powless (B. Gollnick, personal communication, January 11, 2013). John Powless initiated and presented a proposal to the Business Committee, which is the elected council of the tribe and the GTC. The Powless proposal stipulated that the Higher Education Department of the Oneida Tribe provide a $20,000 scholarship to each eligible tribal member providing they meet and continue to fulfill the requirements of the Higher Education Department. This resolution passed with overwhelming support. Over the next decade there were minor changes made to this resolution, but this proposal is still followed to this day.

It is interesting that the language of this resolution includes the statement "whereas the United States continues to abrogate the Oneida Treaty of 1838, and continues to breach its trust responsibility to the Oneida Tribe". The use of this language displays the fact that American Indians are very aware of their status as sovereign nations and are very cognizant of the fact that the United States has not fulfilled its trust responsibility to this day. Instead of waiting for the United States to fulfill these obligation tribes are taking measures to direct their own educational destiny.

Although the Oneida Tribe is able to provide academic financial assistance to its tribal members, this situation is not the norm. The other 10 tribes in Wisconsin are able to

provide some educational support to their members but due to lack of tribal revenue, none are able to provide the same level of service as the Oneida tribe. Many of the South Dakota tribes and North Dakota tribes are very economically depressed and unable to provide any educational support to their members (M. Tuttle, personal communication, January 26, 2013).

The Oneida Higher Education Department provides funding to tribal members to achieve higher education, from an Associate's degree to the PhD level. In 2012, the Higher Education Department funded, "213 students, with the majority of funding going to 128 students working on Associates and Bachelor's degrees" (C. Van Den Berg, personal communication, January 18, 2013). According to C. Van Den Berg, the Higher Education Department keeps track of how many students they provide funding to but they do not track how many students drop out or why they do so (personal communication, January 18, 2013). The drop- out rate among American Indian college students is an acknowledged long- term problem on a national level. Given this consideration, it is unfortunate and very negligible on the part of the department, that the attrition rate is not formally documented.

The Youth Enrichment Services (YES)

The YES program is a department within the education department of the Oneida Nation. This program works with enrolled American Indian students that attend public schools in the area. Due to the large size of the Oneida tribe the majority of American Indian students receiving services are Oneida tribal members. The funding for this program comes from Johnson O' Malley funds with the bulk of the funding being

provided by the Oneida tribe (C. Van Den Berg, personal communication, February 10, 2012).

The YES program has a director and a staff of seven enrichment specialists that work within five school districts that border the Oneida reservation. The YES program has adopted the following mission statement: “We assist in the advancement of the educational, cultural and social development of American Indian students in the Oneida Community and surrounding school districts” (Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, 2017)

In providing services to the five school districts the YES program seeks to:

- Raise the grade point averages of students
- Raise the number of graduates
- Lower dropout rates (Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, 2017)

The enrichment specialists provide a multitude of services to the students in the five school districts they support. Some of the services are tutoring, mentoring, home school liaison services, cultural enrichment, tracking grade point averages, and providing academic support. There are more services offered on the website and brochure, so many that it seems unrealistic that such a small staff could provide adequate services to the 503 students who are listed as eligible for services.

This program is very similar to the Indian Education program which is a component of the Saint Paul Public Schools. I worked in this program for five years as a cultural resource specialist and my colleagues were chemical health specialists, social workers, advisors, and many academic tutors. Although our staffing was different the

goals of student support, academic assistance and community involvement were all aligned to positively impact the achievement gap for American Indian students.

Community Education Department

The Community Education Department is another educational support program that is administered and funded by the Oneida Tribe. They offer a multitude of services which assist many members of the Oneida tribe, other tribes, and non-Indians. The computer lab is available for use during the whole business day, six days a week. Beginners to advanced computer classes are taught by instructors on an ongoing basis.

GED tutoring and testing is a large component of this program. This service serves many Oneida and non-Oneida students in achieving their GED. The most impressive part of their program is the availability of individual tutoring at all college levels in many subject areas. When entering the Community Education Department one will observe many people of a variety of ages working alone, in small groups, or with an instructor in the main study area. The computer lab on the other end of the building is often busy with individuals working independently while the other computer lab may be filled with people attending a class on Microsoft Word or another of the many classes offered free of charge.

The Community Education Program currently has five main employees who handle all the tutoring and teaching of classes. There are four vacant instructor positions that have not been filled over the past three years due to budget cuts within the tribe. It would be a shame if this trend continues as this program provides valuable services to the Oneida tribe and the surrounding communities.

Writing this dissertation caused me to look back at my many years of teaching. My first job was at HOTESS in Minneapolis in 1978, which began a thirty-year career of working mainly with the American Indian population at alternative schools, tribal schools, and public schools. I especially agree with the following quote by (Vine Deloria, 1994):

> We will either continue to operate existing school systems with declining funds or will start to make fundamental changes in how we educate children and allocate resources to do so. Instead of boring us with another tedious recital of the failure of the federal government to educate Indians, which is embarrassingly obvious, the Secretary of Education would do well to find some way to confront the reality of Indian culture, community, and history, and devise an educational program to meet this specific challenge. If traditional institutions, programs and teaching have to be changed, so be it. After five centuries of contact it does not seem too much to ask non-Indian educators and institutions to come to grips with the reality that is the American Indian (pp. 69-70).

I have been around education long enough to see some educational initiatives that are new and innovative and many that are renamed and recycled. American Indian people have come a long way in making educational improvements but we are still held back by outdated practices and procedures because we ourselves are struggling to change and grow for the better. I have hope, because although change has been slow, it is happening, and I believe we will continue to move forward.

The questions of what initiatives have been implemented by American Indian tribes to accomplish the goal of educational self-determination and to improve the quality of education for American Indian people have been addressed in this chapter. The growth of the many national organizations described in this chapter over the decades address the growth of American Indian self-determination at all levels including education.

A strong indicator of American Indian educational self-determination is the growth of tribal schools and tribal colleges across the nation. A more tribal specific example, are the many educational initiatives of the Oneida tribe described in this chapter as evidence of Oneida educational self -determination.

Chapter Three Research Methodology-Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry can mean different things to different researchers. Although there are many ideas about what researchers and practitioners mean when they use the term narrative inquiry, I will use the definition offered by Connelly and Clandinin (2006):

> Arguments for the development and use of narrative inquiry come out of a view of human experience in which humans, individually and socially, lead storied lives. People shape their daily lives by stories of who they and others are and as such they interpret their past in terms of these stories. Story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful. Viewed this way, narrative is the phenomenon studied in inquiry. Narrative inquiry, the study of experience as story, then, is first and foremost a way of thinking about experience. (p. 477).

As stated by Casey (2006), "narrative research is distinctly interdisciplinary, including elements of literary, historical, anthropological, sociological, psychological, and cultural studies" (p.212). Narrative research began to gain popularity in the mid-eighties and has continued to increase in popularity. According to Webster and Mertova (2007), narrative research is becoming more respected in educational research and is becoming more commonly incorporated into other disciplines that have traditionally preferred quantitative methods. Examples of this shift have occurred in medicine, economics, politics, and other typically scientific fields.

Dhunpath (2000) states that "Narrative research is dedicated to celebrating the voices of the silenced. But more than that it celebrates biography as an authentic reflection of the human spirit, a mirror to reflect visions of our other selves" (p.550). This fact makes narrative research especially appropriate for use with marginalized populations, such as Indigenous people. American Indian people have been "silenced," as throughout history, decisions have been made for them that the mainstream population has not experienced. The forced assimilation of American Indian children, using churches and schools, is only one example of the taking away of basic human rights experiences from most tribal nations. Because of this fact, narrative inquiry is very fitting and appropriate for this dissertation.

Narrative research includes a variety of methods that may be used to gather data. Biographies, autobiographies, oral histories, journals, logs, diaries, interviews, and case studies are some forms of narrative research. Narrative research in the form of biographies and other life writing "emphasizes personal stories and narratives, the intensely individual nature of each person's existence and people constantly remaking them as an active ongoing social process" (Dhunpath, 2000, p. 545).

Autobiography, also called "life narrative," is a more recent development in the genre of narrative research. When autobiography is used critically it can solve epistemological problems that are generated by critics of this type of research. When used critically, the autobiographical authors are aware of the political and social considerations and circumstances that influence their stories. Knowledge can be gained through the autobiographical renderings of personal experience, but according to Griffiths (1995),

"Your experience is not enough on its own, bear in mind relevant theory, your political position, and be prepared to reflect and rethink your understanding of the experience over time" (p. 15). In telling my personal story as I did in some chapters, I did my best to follow this advice. For example, in retelling my experience with the Milwaukee race riots, I also researched the event as it was studied by other scholars.

To further support the idea of "life narrative" and autobiography, the following is a statement by Connelly and Clandinin (1990). They believe it is unsatisfactory for the researcher to listen and record the participant's stories without including their own stories. With the practice of collaboration, the stories of the research participants and the researcher can merge to form new stories. So at times, I have also told my story. Given the tumultuous nature of my public education, my stories were sometimes the most difficult to analyze because of the complexity of emotions that were involved.

An example of this occurred in the chapter, "Recollections of Racism," in the section devoted to the stories of Janice and Kirby. I was writing about their school experiences during the Milwaukee race riots and how the riots affected Kirby personally, and more specifically, how it affected Janice's school experience. Writing about their experiences, which occurred during a time of national unrest, caused a buried memory of mine to be resurrected. An incident occurred where a neighbor I loved and respected used a racial slur in front of me in referencing the race riots. It wasn't until I was writing about my participants' experiences during that time that I made the connection between my personal experience and the Milwaukee race riots.

Narrative Inquiry Research Questions:

This qualitative study focused on the experiences of Oneida Indian people who attended public schools or schools administered by churches, (since many Oneida people have attended church-run schools). This is the case because of the proliferation of church-run schools on many reservations in general and the Oneida reservation in particular. The participants attended public or parochial schools within and outside the Oneida reservation. The term non-federal school will be used to refer to a public or parochial school, as boarding schools are federal schools.

This study provides information that will address the current gap in the research in this area of Oneida Indians in the non-federal school setting. There are some narratives that address the Oneida experience in boarding schools but there is a lack of narratives that address the American Indian experience in public schools. That is why I believe the title "Beyond Boarding Schools" is appropriate.

This study used open-ended flexible questions to examine the experiences of Oneida Indians who have attended non-federal schools within and outside the reservation boundaries. Participants were encouraged to elaborate when and where they felt a need.

The main research questions sought to answer the following: What were the experiences of Oneida people who attended non-federal schools and what events or individual person(s) were significant in influencing their educational experiences? In order to encourage people to relate stories that addressed this question, I asked them questions that were open-ended yet specific to their educational experiences. Examples of these questions are the following;

- If you were to relay a story of your experience or an event in school, what story comes to you?
- How did this experience affect your opinion and feelings towards school?
- Did your experience(s) in school affect your career path?
- Which people have influenced your beliefs in regard to education, family members, or school personnel?
- Were there any school experiences, people, events, or practices that had a positive or negative affect on your educational outlook?
- Were there any critical events, positive or negative, that influenced your academic or career path?

The only question used for every interview was the first question, if you were to relay a story of your experience in school, what story comes to you? I used this question as a beginning to help clarify that I wanted individuals to know that they were free to talk about any school event or experience that came to their mind. I wanted them to feel free to tell me their story and to know that I believed their story was important. A story or event that was critical in some way is often closest to a person's memory.

The subsequent questions were only used if the primary question was not answered naturally in the initial interview(s). There were only a few times they needed to be used as the majority of my participants had a lot to tell me about their school experiences. Only one participant, Kirby, needed to be guided back to talking about school experiences because he had a lot to tell me about his life in Milwaukee. His parents were very involved in the Milwaukee urban Indian community and were active in

organizing many social events. His parents even founded an Oneida club called "The Buckskins," which brought the Oneida community in Milwaukee together in a more organized and supportive fashion. While his stories on this subject were extremely interesting and important, they were not the school related stories I was seeking.

In looking at the main research question and the many potential sub questions, I believe the most important element I was looking for was the answer to how each individual successfully navigated the colonial education system (see research participant section). Was it a teacher, a family member, or their own character that helped them to successfully graduate high school and in many cases move on to higher education? How do their stories differ or overlap into similarities? Also, what events and experiences in school were significant in influencing the participant's future education and/or career path? The answers that came out of the interviews in regard to the above question(s) were significant in the creation of Chapter Seven, Inspirations.

Researcher position: Insider/ Outsider Issue:

My position as researcher directly relates to the insider/outsider issue as I interviewed members of my own tribe and community. The beginning of this section will provide some basic information in regard to this issue and the end of the section will provide direct examples that apply to my experience within the Oneida community.

Although indigenous scholars are still a small percentage of the mainstream, there has been enough of an increase that the insider/outsider issue has created debate among researchers in regard to American Indian research. As stated in Innes (2009), critics of insider research believe that insider researchers are not objective and that their

findings may be clouded by over- rapport, thus lacking “scholarly merit.” Insiders counter that their positions as insiders can provide a more accurate and deeper understanding of the community than that which may be provided by outsiders. Insiders are more likely to break down stereotypes, thus creating a more thorough and accurate understanding of the complex issues of the researched community.

Karen Swisher (1996), a well-known indigenous scholar, states how Indigenous scholars can positively contribute to conducting research as insiders in their communities: “What are missing is the passion from within and the authority to ask new and different questions based on histories and experiences as Indigenous people” (p. 85).

I firmly believe in the following statement by Swisher (1996) that the validity of the research process can be enhanced by the researcher being an insider within Indigenous communities:

> How can an outsider really understand life on reservations, the struggle for recognition, sovereignty, economic development, preservation of language and culture? Perhaps they can gain a high degree of empathy and act as "brokers" of sorts, but it takes American Indians and Alaska Natives themselves to understand the depth of meaning incorporated in Indian education to ask appropriate questions and find appropriate answers. A non-Indian colleague summarized the issue with this statement: The view from the outside remains the same; it's the inside view that varies (p. 194).

Indigenous scholars must consider the proper ways to conduct research within their own marginalized group(s). Traditional research methods from the academy that

incorporate distance and objectivity will often directly conflict with proper cultural protocol and practice. An example of this is the difficulty of participant observation. If you are an outsider, it is expected that you will observe more than participate and that your role in the community will be more superficial. As an insider if you observe more than participate, you may be viewed by the community as being unfriendly or aloof.

In many Indigenous communities, asking questions, especially multiple questions, is considered rude and culturally inappropriate. To counter this many Indigenous researchers will use informal conversations or "reflexive" interviews. The key point of gathering information and being culturally appropriate is to be quiet and listen deeply.

The insider/outsider situation is even more complex when it concerns American Indian populations. Amongst American Indian tribes there is considerable diversity, as each tribe should be considered separate nations with unique cultural, language, political, and historical practices and experiences. Also, within tribes and individuals the amount of assimilation, intermarriage, and identification with one's tribal identity varies greatly, so being knowledgeable about the tribal culture and history is important. One must also be aware of the unique historical and political relationship between Indigenous tribes and the United States government especially in regard to forced assimilation.

An example of this situation is relayed in the article by Innes (2009), in which he describes his research among his own tribe, the Plains Cree. He did not grow up on his reservation so he was an urban Indian, which made him both an insider and an outsider. He was met with distrust by some when he began his research and one person stated, "Wait a second. Who are you anyways?" (p. 420). As an insider, I know that when an

Indigenous person asks you who you are, it really means who are you related to? Who are your parents? Who are your grandparents? And so on? In Oneida, it is also part of the culture that when you introduce yourself, especially to an elder, that you relay who your parents and grandparents are. This sharing of information needs to be established so that the newcomer can show that they know who they are in relation to the community. When Innes was able to relay his familial connection to people who lived on the reservation, he was able to open connections, establish rapport and complete his research. According to his description, his people were very open to those who grew up elsewhere and wished to reconnect.

Another example of this situation that differs considerably from the experience relayed by Innes, is among the Oneida of Wisconsin. In Oneida, there is measured skepticism towards Oneidas who were not born on the reservation or have not lived there for a significant amount of time. This is mainly due to the fact that the Oneida were very poor before the 1970s. With the onset of self-determination and revenue generated by gaming and other enterprises, the Oneida are now quite prosperous in comparison to some tribes. Thus, many tribal members have moved back to the reservation now that there are more opportunities there. Many families who have lived in Oneida for generations display resentment towards those returning, as they look at them as being opportunistic. Some families that have lived on the reservation in the times of poverty feel a sense of superiority towards those who are new to the community, now that times are more prosperous.

It has been noted by me and others that non-Indians and members of other tribes are often treated with more acceptance and tolerance than an Oneida who is new to the community. The only exception to this seems to be those who serve in the military. Because of the high respect given to veterans it is acceptable for them to leave the community and return whenever they wish. According to Jerry Danforth (2013), "to be welcoming to newcomers, especially fellow Oneidas, is one of the traditional core values. To go against this value is a dysfunction brought on by forced assimilation, poverty, and historical trauma."

Therefore, although I am a tribal member, I am also an outsider because I am an urban Indian and unknown to many. This situation is balanced out by the fact that I have an Oneida cousin who lives in Oneida. He is a Korean War veteran and survivor of the Korean death march. His story has been documented and he is well known locally and nationally. So when people ask me who I am I state my name and state my familial relationship to Valdor John. Also, my husband's family is very well known and respected and through time I have become more known in the community. So depending on who I am interacting with in the Oneida community, I may be an insider, an outsider, or somewhere in between.

When it pertained to my participants, I believe that all considered me as being an Oneida tribal member, which places me in the insider category. I am new to the community so I don't have the history and large extended family connections that all of my participants have. In being more solitary, except for my husband and his family, I

believe it could place me more in the middle. I was most likely either an insider or in the middle. I don't believe any of my participants considered me an outsider.

Research Participants

The research participants are members of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin and are individuals who identify themselves as Oneida Indians. The participants are a balance of male and female and represent a variety of generations. I interviewed people who attended public schools from the 1950s to the 1970s so a variety of generations are represented.

It was not planned in advance, but all of my research participants are individuals who have at least completed high school and have either pursued higher education or received extensive training in pursuit of their career. The people I interviewed are individuals I have met at cultural and social events on the Oneida reservation in Oneida Wisconsin. The recruitment of participants begun in 2012, when I began living on the Oneida reservation full time and had come to know many people. Since then, I have also become more familiar with the local history and traditions of my unique reservation. The research participants were those who had selected various career paths, and by interviewing people from different generations and genders, I documented what similarities and differences came out in their narratives.

Data Collection

Using open ended questions as discussed in the research question section, an informal interview was conducted with each individual to encourage the research participant to engage in storytelling. As noted by Straus and Corbin (1998):

> Descriptive details chosen by a story teller are usually consciously or unconsciously selective, based on what he or she saw or heard or thought to be important. Although description often is meant to convey believability and to portray images, it also is designed to persuade, convince, express, or arouse passions (p.18).

Each interview was tape recorded using the program called audacity. This audio program allows for editing, saving, and replaying of multiple dialogues. Some notes were taken during the interview to document non-verbal observations but not enough to distract from the interview. Approximately one two-hour interview or one one-hour interview was used to collect the data. In some cases, more or less time was needed depending on the schedule and availability of the participant. I also used email and follow up phone calls and informal conversations to clarify any uncertainties that needed to be addressed.

I interviewed six individuals and summarized their interviews into a written report that included specific quotes when appropriate. After the initial interview, I discussed what I summarized from our interview with each participant and gave them the chance to elaborate or revise. When possible, I used other data to supplement the narratives. Some examples were letters, pictures, and newspaper articles. I also interviewed and quoted additional Oneida community members to gain insight into various aspects of Oneida life, which contributed to the background of stories told. An example of this is the interview I conducted with Harriet Reiter who provided information on the Oneida Elementary School and the Oneida High School.

Included in some narratives was background on the school attended, as I believe some of this information may be valuable historically because some of the schools that participants attended are no longer in existence, and there is very little information available in written sources. The presence or lack of presence of schools on the reservation also reflects the current educational policies in practice at the time. An example being in Jerry's and Louise's story when they were moved from their small local school to a larger school in Seymour. In Jerry's case, he was moved first from Chicago Corners to Seymour and then to Crystal Springs within a two-year time period. Neither participant could remember exactly why they were moved except that it was mandated by others in positions of authority.

It occurred that national policies and events mentioned in the background chapters were an influence on some of my participant's school and life experiences. The issues of termination and especially relocation were especially influential in their schooling experiences.

At times I asked myself the same questions as I did the participants, so autobiography was also used in this study. I found it interesting and at times intriguing to see how other participant's stories compared to my own. It was unexpected, but three main themes emerged that I address in three chapters. The three strongest themes that emerged out of the participants' school stories are Racism, Inspirations, and The Long and Winding Road. Racism in school was something all of my participants experienced. Inspirations is addressed because all were inspired in various ways to achieve their goals. The Long and Winding Road addresses and provides insight in regard to the propensity

for many of my participants, including myself, to have taken a longer time to complete higher education than is the norm in mainstream society.

Data Analysis

I used multiple methods to interpret the data collected in this study. I incorporated a comparative analysis by noting similarities and differences in individual experiences and incorporating "critical reflection." I looked for the "stories within the stories" as stated by Schaafsma and Vinz (2001). This process of analysis involved placing stories alongside each other, alongside one's own story, and finding the larger story behind an initial story. As stated by Schaafsma et al. (2001), "If researchers and narrators maintain the flexibility to look for the stories within stories, the richness seems to emerge" (p. 72.).

The data analysis was also inspired by critical event narrative analysis. Webster and Mertova (2007) use critical event narrative analysis to probe the research participants' understandings of the complexities involved in the topic area. They assume narrative "is an event driven tool of research" and as such, "events are critical parts of people's lives and using them as a main focus for research provides a valuable and insightful tool for getting at the core of what is important in that research" (p.71). According to Webster and Mertova (2007), critical events are identified as having the following qualities. They

- exist in a particular context, such as formal organizational structures or communities of practice;
- impact the people involved;
- have life changing consequences;

- are unplanned;
- may reveal patterns of well-defined stages;
- are only identified after the event;
- are intensely personal with strong emotional involvement (p. 83).

Critical events happen to all people but vary by individual in duration, intensity, and frequency. According to Webster & Mertova (2007), "The critical event will have challenged the storyteller's understanding or world view" (p.74). The challenge of the critical event can be positive or negative, and can influence future behavior and the individual's view of the world.

Many of my participants had negative critical events in their lives that were often related to racism of one type or another. An example being a participant whose critical event was related to the Milwaukee race riots. She experienced racism for the first time in school during the post tension of the race riots. It was an eye opening experience for her and the first time she ever felt that she was "different" from her non-Indian peers. Other critical events were of a negative nature but led to a decision that was positive. An example of this is with two of my participants who were working blue collar jobs and hating the work. They reached a moment in their lives where they realized that they did not want to continue in their current job and they made changes to work towards a more positive future.

The first quality stating that critical events occur in a community is very relevant to my proposal because I am looking at stories that have occurred within the community of school. There are many shared values that occur in a school community. Some shared

values may be positive, while others may not be positive for all involved. There are always those who struggle because they don't fit well into the school community because of race, status, or a multitude of other reasons.

According to Straus (1959), "groups of every size and composition can force their members in and out of all kinds of temporary identities. He refers to this as "status forcing" (p. 83). The term of status forcing relates well to the situation of many American Indian students who struggle to fit into the school community and also retain their identities as American Indians. An example of status forcing can be related to the high dropout rate of American Indian students. There are many reasons for the high dropout rate of American Indian students, yet a very common one as listed in Faircloth and Tippeconnic (2010) was a feeling of being unwanted or "pushed out."

Critical event narrative analysis also classified some events as like events. "An event is classified as a like event if it repeats the context, methods and resources used in the critical event but with different people. Like events occur at the same level as the critical event and because the context is like the critical event, they are labeled 'like events'" (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p.78). An example of a like event occurred in the history of colonial education and the philosophy of General Pratt's "kill the Indian, but save the man." This quote and belief inspired the practice of boarding schools, which forbid the students to speak their native language. This practice created numerous traumas across the nation among many individuals of tribal nations. Today it is called historical trauma, and many tribes, organizations, and individuals are brainstorming methods and procedures to heal those affected.

There were some like events that occurred with some of my research participants. One example is the negative experience of one of my research participant's mothers. She was punished severely in school for speaking the Oneida language. This led to her never speaking the Oneida language again and led to her not teaching her children the Oneida language. Her response was typical of many others who were treated as such and has led to many native languages being endangered.

This study is intended to give voice to the many American Indian people who have endured the oppressive system of colonial education in non-federal schools. There are many questions I hope will be answered by listening to the narratives of the research participants. I have learned and have analyzed the similarities and differences that existed in each of the interviewees school experiences to the best of my ability. I have learned what or who the motivating factor in their lives was that helped them succeed and what critical events or persons may have influenced their choices in regard to their future. I myself am still wondering how I survived and while I have never thrived in school, I have been able to make progress and achieve forward momentum in the academic world.

To remember who you are, you have to forget who they told you to be.
--Unknown

Chapter Four: Dr. Carol Cornelius

I will be telling Dr. Carol Cornelius's entire story because, after listening to her extremely intriguing and rich story, I felt compelled to address it in more detail. It was an unexpected discovery but I found that there were many parallels between Dr. Carol's story, my own story and some of the other participants' stories. As stated by Connelly and Clandinin (1990), they believe it is unsatisfactory for the researcher to listen and record the participant's stories without including their own stories. With the practice of collaboration, the stories of the research participants and the researcher can merge to form new stories. I will be relating my own story in addition, within her entire story. I will be addressing the three main themes that are taken up in the rest of the dissertation: Racism, the Long and Winding Road and Inspirations.

Before even scheduling a formal interview with Dr. Carol, I had run into her at a local coffee shop. Dr. Carol is well known in the community as an educator, especially in the area of Oneida language and culture. She is a woman in her mid-sixties, attractive and gray haired with a rich brown complexion. She walks and talks with confidence and has a ready smile and a friendly confident demeanor.

I told her I was working on my dissertation and that it was going to address the topic of Oneida Indians and the public school experience. Right away she began to tell me about her experience in the Shawano School District and Carol stated that "I graduated in spite of them and not because they had helped me." I was immediately

intrigued as this was very similar to my experiences and feelings. We set up a tentative time to meet and, as it turned out, it was quite a few months before I was able to contact her, but when I did, it was well worth it.

I finally connected on the phone with Dr. Carol and we set a time to meet at her home. We sat down in the kitchen and I started out by explaining how my dissertation topic was oral histories of Oneida people who have attended non-federal schools. I gave her some basic background on my study and my interest in boarding schools, and Indian education in general, which led to my interest in the stories of those who have attended public schools. The entire interview with Carole was very comfortable, interspersed with laughter, on both our parts. I found the interview inspiring, which I will talk more about later.

As explained in Chapter Three, my way of dealing with my position as a tribal member and a researcher was to keep the meeting informal and culturally appropriate by holding the interview more as a conversation and mutual sharing when appropriate. My opening question was "What can you tell me about your experience in school?" Carole immediately launched into her dialogue starting with her childhood in Shawano, Wisconsin.

Early life and Experiences with Racism

Shawano, the small town where Carole grew up, is a half hour west of Oneida and just 15 minutes from the Menominee and Stockbridge Munsee Indian reservations. Carol is from the Oneida and Stockbridge tribes. Carol attended a Lutheran grade school in Shawano in the mid-1950s. Her Dad was an auto mechanic, and her family lived in

Shawano because that's where employment was available. This scenario was very common at this time as the level of unemployment on most reservations was extremely high. In regards to attending Lutheran grade school, Carol stated, "We were the only Indian family, we were their poverty case, their charity case, and they made sure we knew that. There were 25-30 kids in my class that I went through grade school with." (C. Cornelius, Interview, 4/4/15)

In 1962, which coincides with the termination of the Menominee tribe, Carol was in 9th grade, and went to public school in Shawano. As stated in Chapter One, the termination of tribes was a bureaucratic effort to force assimilation upon tribes and acquire their land and resources. Money was the driving issue as the federal government was always looking for ways to cut expenditures in the budget, and the termination of tribes would eventually reduce and eliminate the federal budget for all American Indian agencies. According to Herzberg (1978), "in 1954, the Menominee were officially terminated by the federal government" (p.143).

The termination of the Menominee led to huge losses of tribal assets, such as timber and land. This in turn caused the Menominee tribe to slide deep into poverty. When Carol was in school, the Menominee tribe was still in termination status which had caused the tribe to lose all assistance for their own schools. As a result, the Menominee children were bused from their reservation into the city of Shawano. Although the Menominee reservation is only seven miles from Shawano this was Carol's first experience being around other American Indian students in school. As stated by Carol:

> So here I am, I had been taught in Lutheran school that if we spoke to a Catholic we would go straight to hell. It was very strict like, that if you think a bad thought God is going to thump you straight in the head. So here I am in the public school and here's all these Menominee kids, they're brown like me! I'm not the only Indian, but they're Catholic! [Mutual laughter] So what do I do? I told my mom they're Indian just like me but they're Catholic and I can't talk to them, and she just chuckled. Finally, I noticed that of all these white kids I went to school with in grade school, only two or three of them ever talked to me again. To the rest of them I just blended in. I was one of those Indians. So I decided I'm just going to take a risk and I'm going to talk to those Catholics, and I didn't go to hell [Mutual Laughing] (C. Cornelius, Interview, 4/4/15).

As in many small towns, especially those close to American Indian communities, the racism in Shawano was fierce and permeated the local culture. As Carol explained, racism was something that really shaped her view of the world. She described how in Shawano when she went into Woolworths she had her own clerk following her around. "You got your own personal clerk who follows you everywhere throughout the store".

I completely related to what she was describing as I had experienced the same thing where I grew up as a child and later on as an adult. If I go into a store in a small town that is close to a reservation area, I also get my own clerk. As an Indian person, the coldness and general dislike permeates the very air and is very obvious to me. There was a time when I walked into a store with a White friend close to the Mille Lacs reservation. The coldness and close observation was something I was very aware of. Upon leaving I

remarked to my friend that, “they sure don’t like Indians around here.” My non-Indian friend looked at me in confusion and didn’t understand what I meant. To her, it was all unnoticed.

Carol’s experience in high school was very different from elementary school since she was no longer the only American Indian in her school. She continued to study hard and worked in the lunchroom to pay for her lunch. She told me how in high school, career guidance called all the Indian girls in and gave them pamphlets which directed them toward careers in hairdressing or other female specific service-type jobs. All the boys were steered toward male dominated service jobs such as welding or car mechanics. Carol stated, “That was it for Indians, low expectations, or no expectations. I found out later that I was in the top 15% of my class. I had no idea! They didn’t expect an Indian girl to do anything.” I responded, “You proved them wrong!”

Inspirations

Because so many negative experiences were relayed in regards to Carol’s experiences in public schools, I asked if there were any teachers in the Shawano area that ever helped her or encouraged her. She answered right away, “There was one, when I was in 8th grade, Mr. Hundricks” He was a teacher who came to talk to her parents when she was in 8th grade. He wanted her to go to Concordia, a Lutheran college in Milwaukee. “None of us knew what he was talking about. We had no idea what that was at all”. Because her family of nine children was so poor combined with the school teachers having “low expectations, or no expectations for American Indian students,” the idea of her going to college was a foreign concept to her and her family. Her parents were

products of the same type of schooling as her, so the idea of school beyond high school was an unknown factor.

As Carol remembered this teacher immediately, I also am able to remember a teacher by the name of Mrs. Kaphusman. She was the first and one of the very few teachers who was truly kind to me. Except for one by the name of Mrs. Loew, none were cruel to me, but they were mainly indifferent. They did not seem to notice the racial harassment I endured every day at school. For myself, racism touched me in many ways. But what ran deepest was the isolation and loneliness of being in a racist environment and not having the support or even knowledge of an Oneida community. I had a strong feeling that it wasn't bad to be Oneida and I refused to believe otherwise. This in turn led to even more harassment by those who were racist. It is ironic that the same students that attended St. Charles Elementary School in Chippewa Falls, went to church every morning before school began, but would call me n----- and squaw in school every day after attending church.

I hated school! Besides the verbal assaults there were also physical assaults. At least there were attempts at physical assaults. It wasn't the girls, as most of them considered me beneath their notice, it was the boys. I would ask my parents what to do when I was called racist names and my father instructed me to hit them. He also taught me boxing and judo, which I became very good at, in spite of my small size. My older brother also faced similar aggressions and he would beat up his harassers and they would then leave him alone. On the other hand, my tormentors, once beat up would try again and again. Maybe they thought it a fluke that a smaller girl could beat them up. Although,

I am glad my father taught me how to fight, I wish he or my mother would have taught me alternative ways of dealing with racist name calling and physical aggression. As my parents also grew up in a racist environment this was apparently typical behavior so they did not know how to help me.

I learned something from this experience that would stay with me for life. I learned that when you fight a lot, whether forced to it, or by choice, it changes you. With myself, I became mean and overly physically aggressive. I did not realize that I had turned into this kind of person until I overheard someone say that they viewed me as "mean." It was both shocking and eye opening to me as I did not want to be this type of person and I made efforts to change. To my good fortune, by eighth grade the boys finally ceased their attempts at assault. Later in life, as a teacher, I was able to understand and have insight into dealing with many of the students who, "hated school" and even those who could be considered bullies.

Unlike Carol, I was not a good student. I was so unhappy in school that my only way to escape was inside my mind. So while my body was trapped in school my mind was elsewhere. I also had poor health physically and mentally, causing me too often miss school. Combined, these factors contributed to my poor grades. The teachers never seemed to notice me, like another participant, Kirby, I preferred to be unnoticed because when I was noticed it was often a negative experience. It would have been much better for me if I would have been able to focus on my studies as Carol did rather than retreating from my bitter reality.

I asked Carol if there were other factors that inspired her to keep learning. Carol stated:

I was always good in school. I just loved to learn. I had to study hard. I just absolutely love to learn! (Said with passion) And I think that's been a big thing. But, maybe it was an escape, from the poverty. My dad was an alcoholic and all the stuff that comes with that. You don't want to be poor the rest of your life. Because we were so poor. I'm the oldest of nine kids. So, big family and lots of poverty. In grade school I saw studying as an escape from home. At high school I worked, I collected lunch tickets, in that way I earned my lunch. You were expected at age 18 to take care of yourself (C. Cornelius, Interview, 4/4/15).

Carol relayed how her Aunt Dot, Dorothy Davids, was the first American Indian woman to graduate from the State Teachers College at Stevens Point University in 1945. There is a room dedicated to her at Stevens Point. She was a 9th grade English high school teacher who had a lifelong commitment to teaching and advocacy for students. She earned a Master's degree in 1961 and eventually became a professor in education and community development (Dorothy Davids, 2017). She was known for her expertise in the development of Native American curriculum, multicultural education, and addressing bias in educational curriculum. Carol stated, "She had to have been an example, maybe subconsciously, how if you get an education you can get a better job. Later when I got serious about going to college she became my mentor."

The Long and Winding Road

This section refers to the subject of moving through a degree plan in a convoluted fashion. I have noticed a common thread in the lives of my participants. Many, myself included, did not go straight through an academic career path like most successful people do who are leaders in higher education. This direct path appears to be the only way accepted by mainstream society. I call this journey through life which always returns to learning, the "Long and Winding Road".

On this journey we went to work, had children, got married, unmarried, relocated, etc. But throughout it all we were led back to education. We often continued to work, and participated in other significant efforts, while we attended school or trainings. So this next section will address the many changes in Carol's career and how her journey through life always led back to learning and how she first worked at manual labor then climbed the corporate ladder at IBM. In time she began her climb up the academic ladder.

Like many other Oneidas, and some of my research participants, Carol eventually moved to Milwaukee under the Relocation Act. As stated in Chapter One, the BIA administered relocation as a recruitment program and many American Indians left the reservation after being enticed with hopes of good jobs and housing assistance in many major cities such as Los Angeles, Chicago, and Milwaukee. In reality the relocation program was underfunded by Congress which led to only partial success. Some American Indians were able to secure proper housing and jobs while others ended up housed in slums, and if jobs were acquired they were often low paying temporary jobs.

In moving to Milwaukee in the sixties, a much larger city with a diverse population, she noticed and appreciated the positive difference and acceptance of different cultures. When she would go shopping she no longer was viewed with suspicion as she had been in Shawano. As Carol relates, “And when I moved away to Milwaukee and went shopping, I didn’t get a clerk. I thought: that’s the way the world works! That showed me how ingrained the racism was, that I experienced, in Shawano.” According to Webster and Mertova (2007) this revelation of Carol’s can be identified as a critical event. Some qualities of a critical event are the following; has “life changing consequences; are unplanned; may reveal patterns of well-defined stages, are only identified after the event and are intensely personal with strong emotional involvement” (Webster & Mertova, 2007).

An interesting parallel in another participant’s stories is the experience of Janice who moved into the city of Milwaukee during a similar time frame as Carol. Their mutual appreciation of the diversity in the city was a positive experience for both of them. As stated by Janice, “Milwaukee was a big city and I worked downtown Milwaukee. That was a melting pot, all nationalities were there. East Indian, Hispanic, Puerto Ricans, Germans, Blacks, it didn’t matter. I worked with all of them. So it wasn’t an issue with me”.

Carol stayed with her grandmother and went to school for book keeping at the technical college. That was her first attempt at going to post-secondary school. But she didn’t finish as she got married and had children. I also did not complete my first try at post-secondary education as I decided to go to work in Minneapolis and ended up with a

memorable job at an American Indian alternative school. It wasn't planned but this job ended up setting my teaching career path in motion so it could be defined as a critical event also.

And then, Carol jumped to how after living in Milwaukee she moved to the Stockbridge reservation in the late 1960s. Under a special program she was given the opportunity to go to Antigo Vocational School. As stated by Carol, "It must have been one of those federal programs during that time period that we got to go to school. I did bookkeeping again and this time I got it. I finished book keeping."

Carol relayed that while living in Stockbridge and prior to going back to school she had worked in a pickle factory in the area and how going home to shower she could not get rid of the pickle smell. Many of her co -workers had worked there for decades. She remembers thinking, "I'm not gonna do this my whole life. So that was one of those motivating moments, where you make a choice and say No, No." Besides being defined as an inspirational moment, this major decision can also be determined to be a critical event as it steered Carol away from blue collar work, towards white collar work and eventually her true calling, education and being an educator. The following describes this progression.

In 1970, Carol moved back to the Green Bay area and acquired a job at IBM. Working for IBM was another experience in racism for her, as she was hired because of Affirmative Action and the company 'let her know that was why she was hired.' She worked her way up from mailroom clerk to middle management. But she wasn't happy in this kind of work and she left her corporate job to work with Indian children as part of the

Indian Education program in Green Bay. As stated by Carol, “They thought I was nuts to leave, and gave me a year leave, in case I wanted to return. But working with Indian kids is what I wanted to do.” As it turned out, she never did return to IBM.

So in 1973, due to the Indian Education Act, Carol started work as a Home School Liaison for Indian Education, for the Green Bay Public Schools. As a liaison she would assist American Indian students in a multitude of ways. Most often the liaison position was meant to be a bridge from home to school so if there were behavior or attendance issues the liaison was often sent out to communicate with the families. Carol stated that, “I had the same workload and responsibilities as a school social worker. But the liaisons, typically did not have a degree, so they were paid much less that a school social worker.” In spite of this inequity in pay: she enjoyed her work.

I was not a home school liaison but I worked as a teacher with a team of American Indian professionals, home school liaisons, social workers, and guidance counselors who worked to assist all American Indian children who attended school within the Saint Paul Public School District. My job and Carols were both made possible by the passing of the Indian Education Act in 1972 (see appendix).

Although the time frames and locations were different it is significant that we both worked for the Indian Education Program. The underlying mission of the Indian Education program was to assist the American Indian student in the day to day mission of attendance and achievement in school with the ultimate goal being graduation. The day to day chores of connecting with students and parents, seeing that a child had shoes for gym and supplies for school, were all part of the ultimate mission to raise student

achievement. By raising student achievement, the goal was to also positively impact graduation statistics for American Indian students. For both of us, this job began a lifelong commitment to assisting American Indian students.

Carol's second marriage resulted in her leaving the Indian Education Program in Green Bay, Wisconsin and moving out to New York to the Seneca reservation to live in 1978. She became the director of the Seneca Language Program. She also inquired at the State University of New York, one of the local universities, about finishing her BA. In looking at her credits they determined she had enough to have junior status. She decided to finish her degree and become a teacher. At this time, she had to take a year's leave of absence to do her student teaching and she successfully completed her program.

Carol stated, "I was 40 before I got my BA. That pattern, family, work, trying to squeeze in classes. Taking one class a semester." I then talked about how I also had taken longer to finish my BA as I was a single parent at the time. I wasn't a typical student. I was a little older, I was a single parent, I was poor and I had no family support. I would go to my classes and go straight home as I had to pay a babysitter. So I didn't have time to enjoy the social aspects of the university. It took me five years to graduate but I did in 1980. Years later, when I decided to get my Master's degree, I was working full time, and still a single parent, so I just took one class at a time, and kept moving forward until I finished.

Carol next described some of her observations in public schools and seeing young white students walk down the hall wearing stereotypical American Indian headdresses. She views this behavior as showing that the teacher is uninformed about American

Indians. She sees racism as a lack of knowledge and that racism gets handed down generation to generation and that the key to effecting positive change against racism is education. As I have observed the very same behavior in schools and society, I agree with her views on racism, and her belief that education can be a key factor in changing racist behavior.

Carol said, "I remember as I was graduating. This young man said he had another question to ask me about American Indians. He said, what about the Indians in Africa? I thought my God this young man is walking across the stage to get his teaching license." That experience coupled with her observations in schools motivated her to apply for her Masters and PhD program and helped determine her dissertation question.

After graduating with her Bachelors, Carol wanted to go for her Master's degree and straight into a PhD. She was discouraged by one of her university professors who wanted her to just focus on getting her Masters. Carol was insistent in that she was sure of her goal. Finally, the professor told her to go talk to her advisor. She went to her advisor and he said, "Why should we learn about Indians? What's the point?" She told him about Russia and how it was just a huge blob on the map and the propaganda that she was taught as a child to feel sorry for them because they didn't have what we have in America. And when the country broke up there were all these other countries that still had their own language and culture. She related that she saw a similarity between the Soviet Union and American Indians. "We are still here and in spite of all that has happened to us, we are still here." So he agreed that she pursue a combined Masters and

PhD. The question of her dissertation was, “How do you teach about cultures respectfully?”

After completing her dissertation, she moved immediately back to the Green Bay area to work as a professor at the University of Green Bay (UWGB). As stated by Carol, “I finished and got in the moving van and came to UWGB and got ready to teach. It was a long road. I think it was absolutely my love of learning that motivated me and secondary was to get out of poverty. I did not want to live in that dire poverty.”

When Carol came back to Oneida, to live and work, the Oneida tribe had a reception for her at the Radisson in recognition of achieving her doctorate. She was told by her sister that the Shawano paper had called to interview her because she had graduated from Shawano High School. Carol stated, “They wanted to interview me. I said I have one thing to say to Shawano. [I started laughing as she showed me the middle finger]. I got my education in spite of them. [Said very passionately] I saw so many of my peers just fold. Go off into alcoholism and drugs. I was defiant and so aware of the racism. That Indians were second class. I would never accept that!”

Although she is retired, she still works part time at UWGB as an instructor and an elder advisor. She continues to be involved in educational initiatives in the state of Wisconsin and the Oneida community. She has lived in Oneida for a long time now and is a well-known respected member of the Oneida community.

Wengraf (2001) stated, “that there is only one first time to listen and transcribe a tape. The tape will always wait patiently to be transcribed; the ideas that spring from you as you write will vanish quickly” (p.210). As I listened to the first section of my

interview with Dr. Carol, I was intrigued and inspired. Her experiences with racism were similar enough to mine that I could relate, but her experiences were more negative as they were ingrained in the institutions of learning she attended and the community she lived in. While I was the only American Indian in my school and community and racism was prevalent, it was even more prevalent in a town like Shawano as there was a strong Indian presence in the schools and in the community due to the close proximity of three different tribal communities. The Indian presence was not welcome or appreciated, and racism against Indians was deeply ingrained in the local culture and still is to this day. Also, her experiences with racism were intertwined with the presence of extreme childhood poverty, while mine were not.

While she took much longer to get her BA than I did, I am taking much longer to get my PhD than she did. In listening to her words I admire her determination to move forward and reach her goals. I feel inspired to work harder to reach my own goals, the main one being, my goal to complete my PhD. As I write this, I need inspiration, as I am far removed from the world of academia. I feel that I have never been a part of this world but hung around the fringes of it. Listening to and working with Carol's story motivated me to work harder to reach the goal of completing my dissertation.

The Earth is the Mother of all people, and all people should have equal rights upon it.
--Chief Joseph

Chapter Five: Recollections of Racism

Janice and Kirby's Stories

During the course of my interviews, racism was a recurring theme that surfaced in the stories that were shared with me by my dissertation participants. When I first determined that I would collect the stories of Oneida people that have attended non-federal school, I did not try to predict the results of my research, but I was not surprised by the fact that racism was a common experience for all of my participants. In this chapter, the disregard and disdain of cultural differences relates specifically to Oneida people. In most instances, this ignorance resulted in hurtful acts towards the participant(s). The negative inter-actions that the participants experienced wore many different guises but underneath the mask was the same face – "racism."

In this chapter, I first compare and contrast the stories of two of my participants, Kirby and Janice, who both grew up outside the Oneida reservation. I also include my own story with theirs as I also grew up outside the Oneida reservation and our experiences with racism mainly centered around the same national event, which occurred in the 1960s. I then explore the experiences of racism of Jerry and Louise. I compared their stories together because they both attended the same elementary and secondary schools on or near the Oneida reservation. While Louise's story relates more specifically to "systemic racism," Jerry's experience was blatant and involved physical aggression. The intensity and type of racism varied by individual, so this chapter will highlight four

of my participant's stories in greater detail. The experience of racism for the remainder of my participants will be told in a more summarized manner.

In the following paragraphs I will first be restating and analyzing Janice's and then Kirby's experiences with racism within school. Both experiences took place in and around the city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, far away from the Oneida Indian reservation. Both families had moved away from Oneida either because of relocation or they were prompted by the search for jobs and better housing. Both fathers were veterans, so they both purchased a family home with a VA loan. Kirby's family stayed in the city of Milwaukee while Janice's father settled them in Oak Creek, a smaller city outside of Milwaukee. Both were the youngest child in their family and both were the first to be born off the reservation. Within their stories, there are many similarities and differences, and although there is an 8-year difference in age, they were both affected by one event that made local, regional, and national news and was felt across the nation.

The event was the Milwaukee race riots of 1967. The racial tension between African Americans and mainstream society over lack of jobs and inadequate housing in the urban areas of Newark, Detroit, and Milwaukee erupted into racial riots that led to a great loss of life and destruction of property. According to M. McLaughlin (2014), the race riots that took place during the summer of 1967 started in Newark and spread to "almost 170 cities in 34 states" (p.7).

Janice attended public school in Oak Creek, a smaller town outside of Milwaukee. Her experience with racism was instigated by the race riots in Milwaukee. Janice's first

memorable experience with racism as an Indian student in the public school system was shortly after this event. As told by Janice:

> In school, I wasn't treated any differently because I had dark skin as a youngster, and I wasn't aware of being a minority until my junior year in high school in 1966, when the racial riots came and that's when things flip flopped. I experienced racism from my teachers and not from my students. I had one teacher who was the wrestling coach and he said some racial remarks. It was an elective, it was American History, and I didn't agree with some of the things because that isn't what we were taught culturally. And when I challenged him he told me that "I had to get out of my teepee and do studies" and I couldn't believe that he said that. And the whole class, even, at that time, because the riots were so raw and so right there, they all gasped.
>
> And I looked around and I thought this is an elective and I knew it wasn't right but I got up and walked out. He told me not to, but I did. I went down to the school office because I knew Mr. Smith, [the principal] and felt I could trust him. He went to our church, we were Sunday goers every Sunday and he knew my family. They asked why I was there and I reported what was said. He took the teacher off as wrestling coach for the semester, and that's when I was retaliated against because the wrestlers said it was my fault that he was taken off. And that was the first time I ever felt that I was different (J. Hirth, Interview, 10/23/14).

In school Janice was very outgoing and had many friends. She didn't feel that she was ever discriminated against for being an Oneida Indian. This changed for her in high

school when a teacher made racially charged statements that she feels were influenced by the post tension of the Milwaukee race riots. The principal of the school was a family friend as he knew Janice and her family. The [principal] of the school was the highest ranking person within the hierarchy of the school society. He came to her defense and punished the offending teacher, which led to reprisals against Janice by the students on the wrestling team. Although it was positive that the principal tried to help Janice, there was nothing he could do about the underlying community racism that was present in the school and ignited by the emotionally charged experience of the race riots. It is fortunate that Janice was a strong individual and had a network of friends and family who provided positive support. Over time, the tension dissipated, but it was an eye opening experience for Janice.

Another participant, Kirby, was also present in Milwaukee during this same time frame. As told by Kirby:

> the riots occurred and I didn't understand what was going on. All the schools were closed. You had to turn your lights out at a certain time and keep the curtains closed. So we were allowed to play in the basement because we couldn't play outside for at least a couple of weeks, I remember asking my parents why we don't go north to grandma and grandpa's in Oneida. (K. Metoxen, Interview, 1/29/15).

In analyzing Kirby's experience, I note many differences in his experience than that of Janice's experience. While Janice was in high school in a Milwaukee suburb, during this time frame, Kirby was in grade school in the inner city of Milwaukee. As

Kirby stated, he did not understand what was going on but the feeling of unrest and fear was paramount in the city at this time. He wanted most to go to his grandparents' home, in Oneida, because he felt a sense of safety there. In Milwaukee, his daily childhood routine was altered significantly causing him anxiety and confusion. This shows that racism doesn't have to be blatant to be hurtful. The incident of the race riots did not cause any other personal repercussions in school or the community.

As for myself, I originally did not intend to include my personal experiences in this section, but in listening to my participants' stories and researching the race riots of 1967, my own childhood memories were recalled. I had not thought of it for years but I now recall an incident that occurred when I was about ten years old. I had not previously connected this incident with the race riots until I started to listen to the stories of Janice and Kirby. As I was writing about their experiences and researching the race riots, my memories reignited after all those years.

At this time, I lived in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. My closest neighbor was an elderly man and wife, and their names were Mr. and Mrs. Paul. They seemed very kind and I always felt welcomed visiting at their home. One day, Mr. Paul was in his garage pouring metal into trays to make hooks for fly fishing lures. The garage door was up and there were a few other adults standing around with him while he worked. I remember Mr. Paul saying, "Those damn N------ are shooting to kill." I just remember being so shocked to hear those words from his mouth. I knew that n----- was a hate word and it was one that was often used toward me by many racist students at school and in the larger community. I don't remember exactly what I said, but I know I expressed disbelief and

disagreement with his words. I was already an introvert even at this early age, so I know it took a lot of courage for me to speak up, but when I did there was awkward silence amongst the adults; Mr. Paul didn't say any more, so I left. When I got home, I told my mom what was said and she said "no, it's the police who are shooting to kill." In researching the race riots of 1967 Bergensen (1982), argued that the majority of deaths and injuries in all of the affected cities were committed by the police and national guard against African Americans.

In giving deeper thought to the race riots and how the repercussions spread across the nation touching communities large and small, I felt compelled to comment that the race riots are seen by most people as a Black and White issue because that is what is most obvious. There was however so much more to these larger events, such as what led up to them, and what actions were generated afterwards. Some of the causes and effects that were realized from the riots are captured in our stories. Many Caucasian people felt the freedom to unleash their hate towards Black people even though they may have never even met a Black person. Others felt free to extend their hate broadly toward other people of color.

For Janice, Kirby, and me, the Milwaukee race riots can be identified as a critical event as explained in greater detail in chapter three. The event was certainly unexpected and had life changing consequences. Another criterion for identifying this event as critical is that this event was only identified as critical after the event. The event also was intense and involved strong emotions for all of us as youngsters, including my once suppressed experience of racism forty years later (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p. 79).

After the tensions ignited by the race riots settled down. Kirby and Janice continued to attend public school in the Milwaukee area. While Janice was very social and outgoing, Kirby, on the other hand, was painfully shy and tried his best to be unnoticed by his teachers and his peers. This was difficult because of his striking blue green eyes. Kirby said, "People weren't sure of what I was because of my light skin and blue eyes. My eyes attracted people. The teachers would say, 'Oh you have such pretty eyes.' I would always look down." (K. Metoxen, Interview, 1/29/15). As told by Kirby, his farthest memory of identifying with being different from others was his Dad telling him,

> "if anyone asks you who you are you say you're an Oneida Indian and don't you be ashamed of it. But don't you think you're any better than that German lady across the street or the Polish family next door." So I knew we just had to get along. I think the rationale was that they are just as proud to be German or Polish as I should be proud to be Oneida (K. Metoxen, Interview, 1/29/15).

Kirby's experience in school was more stressful because students, mainly the boys, would often fight to establish as relayed by Kirby, "the pecking order." He did notice that his brother, who was darker than he was got picked on more often, and there was a biracial girl who was also picked on more so than others. So it seemed being darker did influence the degree of racism among the students.

In Kirby's story it is obvious he felt the need to expend considerable energy to stay unnoticed by his teachers and peers.

> I was the youngest and an introvert. I was always watching and looking. My brother Kelly was an extrovert and he liked to fight and he was good at it. He was my saving grace. Because of my brother's ability to fight and liking to fight I wasn't picked on. I remember when people would start to pick on me someone would say that's Kelly's brother so they would leave me alone because they knew Kelly would beat them up. (K. Metoxen, Interview, 1/29/15)

I asked him how he was treated by the teachers in school and he replied, "I was afraid of the teachers. In school I would just do everything I was supposed to do." He didn't excel academically in school but he didn't do bad enough to attract attention.

Kirby and Janice both kept their ties with Oneida, but where Janice considered Oneida "home," it wasn't the same with Kirby until later years as he evolved into a more social person. As stated by Kirby; "I was such an introvert it was hard for me to make friends. Even when we went to Oneida I would hide behind my parents. It took me a while to get comfortable. We went to Oneida for summer vacations, funerals, and weddings."

> Janice had a different view of Oneida throughout her life. As stated by Janice, when my parents told me we were going home I knew it was Oneida. I never really considered Oak Creek my home. We were all going home this weekend and we all knew what that meant. It was a five-hour drive on the back roads to go visit grandma and grandpa and aunties and uncles and cousins. That was my folk's home, and that was our home. We did that regularly. My friends knew that

> I was Native, but that never bothered them. I was never… They were never prejudiced against that. (J. Hirth, Interview, 10/23/14)

This is where Kirby's experience with racism differs as it was also related to his traveling home to Oneida. When he was in the 7th grade, Kirby told his non-Indian school friends that he was going up north for a week. His friends wanted to know what the reservation was like. "They would ask if it had a gate around it and if you had to ride a horse into it. Also do you live in teepees? Where do you stay? Where do you go to the bathroom?" Kirby relayed, "At this time in Oneida in the sixties there was no indoor plumbing. We had out houses and had to pump and haul our own drinking water. I was ashamed of this. Because my non-Indian friends would express disgust at this." One could interpret Kirby's friends' responses as simply ignorant, rather than born of malice, as they were Kirby's "friends." It is my own belief that racism is many different things, but ignorance can be a leading factor towards racism. As stated in Dr. Carol's story, she sees racism as a "lack of knowledge and that racism gets handed down generation to generation and the key to effecting positive change against racism is education."

The stories of Janice and Kirby have many similarities, but they also have unique differences. Janice was in school in a smaller city where she was the only Oneida, while Kirby went to an inner city school where there was more diversity. Except for the events stirred by the race riots, Janice's school experience was fairly comfortable unlike Kirby, who was an introvert and struggled to find his comfort zone.

Kirby came to fully embrace the Milwaukee urban Indian experience as his parents were very involved in organizing and planning social and support events for the

Oneidas living in Milwaukee. Janice also worked in Milwaukee after high school and participated with her Godparents in many of the urban Indian social and cultural events but more so as a teenager and young adult. Kirby's experience in contrast was from a young child into adulthood and continues to this day.

In my analysis of Kirby and Janice's experiences, I determined Janice as being an extrovert and very social and Kirby as being an introvert and very shy. I believe their character traits influenced their experiences with racism and their overall school environment. There are many factors that determine how a person deals with racism and other stressful events. Where you live, the presence or lack of, a support system, such as family and positive role models are crucial factors. As an introvert myself, I can remember the struggle to just walk across a crowded lunchroom, which is something most people take for granted.

Kirby and Janice both had their challenges and both had to deal with racism. In spite of their individual differences, both eventually came home to Oneida and found a career working for the Oneida Tribe in management positions. Both are well known, accomplished, and respected members of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin to this day.

Louise Cornelius

Louise Cornelius is a long term resident of Oneida. She is currently the Gaming General Manager of all gaming properties on the Oneida reservation. The long journey of her career in the gaming industry in described in Chapter Six. The following will describe her experiences as a student on the Oneida reservation and later as a student at Seymour High School.

This next story portrays another form of racism, a subtler form and one that involves exclusion and long- established, uneven power relationships that are present yet today. This type of racism can remain undisturbed, unidentified, or dormant for many generations. Institutional or systemic racism is one type of racism that was prevalent at Chicago Corners and at Seymour Schools. As Feagin & Elias state (2013), "The concept of 'systemic racism' refers to the foundational, large-scale and inescapable hierarchical system of US racial oppression devised and maintained by whites and directed at people of color" (p.936). The Oneida story of this type of racism will unfold in the following paragraphs.

Before telling Louise's story, I should provide some information on the school involved, as it was very much a part of Oneida local history for many generations and was one of the many places in the community where systemic racism occurred. Chicago Corners was one of four state-run schools that provided schooling for Oneida and non-Oneida children within the reservation boundaries. The other three state-run schools had large populations of Oneida students, but Chicago Corners was known to have the largest percentage of Oneida students. The official name of this school was Oneida State Graded #4, but it was called Chicago Corners from its conception in 1917 as a district day school until it was demolished in 2013 (Kalihwisaks, 10/3/2013).

When it was built in 1917, Chicago Corners was considered state of the art for its time. It originally had two rooms that could house forty students each; it had electricity, it was heated with a coal furnace, and it had no indoor plumbing until the 1950s (E. Elm, personal communication, 5/2/16). The building had major renovations in the 1960s with

the addition of a gymnasium and a lunchroom. Over the years, countless Oneida students attended school there until the building was closed as a school in 1968. After its closure as a school, it housed the Oneida Head Start program, and over the years' multiple tribal programs were housed in the building. The building was also used for meetings, and the gymnasium was used for social and sporting events into the 2000s.

In spite of being on the reservation and providing education to mainly Oneida children, as stated in Louise's story, there were no Oneida teachers until 1956. Evelyn Elm went to school there in the 1940s and was the first Oneida teacher to teach there in 1956. The school board consisted of all Caucasian members until the mid-1960s. Evelyn explained that the Oneida parents of that time were mainly uneducated or products of boarding schools, so they did not feel they had a right to have input or involvement in the education of their children. According to Evelyn, the Oneida people worked as laborers for many of the Caucasian farmers. Many Oneida women provided domestic labor on the reservation and in the surrounding areas of Green Bay, especially the more affluent areas. As a result, Oneida people tended to feel that they were in a subordinate position in society, and their Caucasian neighbors affirmed this (E. Elm, personal communication, 5/2 16).

Louise went to school at Chicago Corners on the Oneida Reservation during the 1960s. Only grades 1-8 were taught as there was no kindergarten then. The student body was 97% Oneida with a few Caucasian farm kids. Like most schools of the time and area, it had a very standard curriculum, and no Oneida language or culture was taught. Louise remembers that she lived three miles from school and that each teacher taught two

grades. The teachers at the school were all Caucasian, as Evelyn Elm was not working there at this time. The only tribal member who worked at the school was an Oneida lady who worked as a cook in the kitchen and provided a daily lunch for the students. As relayed by Louise, "A good experience was we always had home cooked meals for our lunch." (L Cornelius, Interview, 11/ 18/15).

Louise tells more about the climate of the school, which had both positive and negative factors in the following statement:

> School was pretty uneventful. It was small, everybody that lived on one end of the reservation stuck together. We were family, we were friends, we were close. A negative experience I remember, we had our own little racism going on that was obvious. The non-tribal who attended had their own little cliques. I always felt that the nontribal teachers treated the white students more favorably. You could tell, you could feel it. (L Cornelius, Interview, 11/ 18/15).

In spite of the feelings of being treated as less important than the Caucasian students and the presence of systemic racism within the school administration, I think the positive feelings of closeness, family, and community outweighed the negative. That feeling of community and family in a school setting that existed among the Oneida students is something that is hard to find in mainstream society. Part of this is because many people belong to large extended families and many times residents of Oneida can be surrounded by siblings, cousins, and other family members. There is also the shared history and culture of being Oneida that can unite people. As stated by Louise, which explains it well, "We were family, we were friends, we were close."

When Louise reached 7th grade, the students were informed that they would go to Seymour for school next year. Seymour is not a large town, but in comparison to the smaller community of Oneida, it is much larger and is the closest larger town. As related by Louise "I remember there was a big fear. I went to Seymour in 8th grade; it was a junior high. I was so scared because we didn't have a lot of exposure to the outside world; we were just a handful in the crowd." The change from Chicago Corners to Seymour Junior High could be identified as a critical event. Even though it was anticipated, it was not a free choice, and the consequences were unknown until they occurred.

Louise attended Seymour High School the following year, which continues to have a significant population of Oneida students to this day. As told by Louise, "The civics class was the first F I received. It was a total and complete failure. I had no clue my parents never talked about voting or politics. And we never learned about it at Chicago Corners."

> As stated by Louise, there was a lot of racism there, unspoken racism.
>
> You could feel it all the time with the students, who were mainly farmers. There was always that feeling of being less than. It was with the teachers also. The teachers would help their own race. I remember I needed help in algebra. I was told to just go read the book and I would get it. I never received tutoring. No one helped me learn so I received a D (L Cornelius, Interview,11/18/14).

In spite of academic struggles, Louise graduated in 1976. Her father was very influential in her life. He was very strict and was the boss at his job. He was also very

involved in sports, was a volunteer coach, and instilled sports in all his children. Louise remembers him saying, “none of you are going to fail.” As stated by Louise, “A lot of the discipline in my life came from being an athlete. My father was very disciplined, he demanded respect. He disciplined his players and I lived around that.”

Louise’s mother worked in a manufacturing company and before that she did domestic labor at rich people’s homes in De Pere as many other Oneida women did during this time frame. Louise described her as a simple person; she was not educated, but she was very spiritual. So with the support and balance provided by her two parents, Louise went on to graduate and eventually return to higher education. Her journey from manual labor to become the Gaming General Manager for the Oneida tribe of Wisconsin will be addressed more fully in The Long and Winding Road chapter of this dissertation.

Jerry Danforth

Jerry Danforth also attended Chicago Corners and Seymour High school, but it was in a different time frame, being 10 years earlier than Louise Cornelius. Louise attended grade school in the sixties, while Jerry attended grade school in the fifties. Jerry started out his school experience in Kindergarten in Detroit, Michigan. The extreme poverty and lack of work and housing in Oneida led to his parents leaving the reservation to find work in a larger city. For many Oneida of the time, this was not an uncommon occurrence. His time in Detroit was short as the family decided to move back to Oneida the following year.

He then attended first grade at Chicago Corners when the school was still just a two-room schoolhouse. There was no lunchroom so students brought their own lunch

from home. One room housed grades 1-4 and grades 5-8 were in the other room. Each room had 25-30 students and one teacher for all the grades in one room. Jerry remembers his first grade teacher, Mrs. Garvey, a Caucasian person from the local community. The curriculum was very standard and Jerry remarked that the kindergarten class in Detroit was larger than all grades 1-4 in Oneida.

The teacher would call grade 1 to the front of the room for math then grades 2-3-4. This was the norm and the only type of instruction he knew. In hindsight, he stated that the option of being exposed to what grades 2-4 were learning about the same subject at a higher level was beneficial. As when Louise attended, the vast majority of students were Oneida and all the teachers were Non-Oneida until when Jerry was in 5th grade and his aunt Evelyn came to teach the younger grades. As mentioned previously, she was the first Oneida teacher to teach at Chicago Corners.

After 4 years, he advanced to the big room; he remembers class size diminishing. He stayed at Chicago Corners until the beginning of 7th grade. In 7th grade all of the students were transferred to Seymour. Other than possible overcrowding at Chicago Corners I am unable to find out why the students were moved. In talking to other participants in regard to their school stories, it seems like the Oneida students were moved around a lot, and knowing the racism of the time, I can only see this disregard for continuity of education as a form of racism.

As with Louise's experience, attending Seymour for the first time was a huge unexpected change and could be considered a critical event. Seymour Elementary School was a much larger school with much larger class sizes. Another different experience was

having to take a bus rather than walking to school. Jerry describes Seymour as very busy and unfamiliar and the population demographics flip flopped from what he was used to. He remembers standing in line for lunch and the crowding and pushing that ensued as being an unfamiliar and stressful situation. In Oneida there was never a line because students brought their own lunch.

Jerry relayed that his first experience with blatant interactional racism was at Seymour Elementary School. He experienced innuendos and derogatory comments from some students. His reaction to this form of racism was physical and aggressive. This stopped the comments at least to his face, but as stated by Jerry, "the lingering thought in the back of my mind was the knowledge that I was looked down upon for being Oneida."

The experience with blatant aggressive racism occurred again when Jerry went to Seymour High School for ninth grade. Once again, Jerry defended himself in an aggressive manner until the Caucasian students that liked to pick on the Oneida students learned that this behavior would not be endured. Jerry became known for protecting himself and other Oneidas from racist aggression.

In summary, all of my participants experienced racism of one type or another in their schooling. For some such as Janice it had critical significance; for others such as Kirby it was scary and hurtful. For Louise, it was a feeling of being treated as less important than others who were White. Jerry's experience with racism involved blatant in-your-face name calling.

The other participants whose stories I did not tell in more detail in this section also experienced racism. Loretta Metoxen explained that she did not feel racism so much

from her peers but was aware that the parents and community set racial boundaries. The parents were discriminating. Guys would ask her out but the parents would disapprove. As Loretta stated, “Half polish and half Oneida, plus I smelled like a barn.” As stated in The Long and Winding Road chapter, she experienced sexism at Seymour High School and in the military.

As for racism in the military, the situation was very unique and different from mainstream society. As stated by Loretta, “the military was the most integrated place I have ever been, but being integrated did not apply off base. Two people of different races could not walk together in Biloxi, Mississippi in this time period, or they would be arrested.”

As told in Dr. Carol’s story, she experienced racism in school and growing up in the small town of Shawano. Racism in its many forms has touched her in many ways her whole life. Racism made such an impact that she became a professor in higher education to teach teachers how to teach and learn about other cultures in a respectful manner.

For myself, racism touched me in all of the aforementioned ways. But what ran deepest was the isolation and loneliness of being in a racist environment and not having the support or even knowledge of an Oneida community. Although I had no prove of it, I had a strong feeling that it wasn’t bad to be Oneida, and I refused to believe otherwise. This in turn led to even more harassment by those who were racist. It is ironic that the same students who attended St Charles Elementary school in Chippewa Falls went to church every morning before school began, but would call me n----- and squaw in school

every day. As my parents also grew up in a racist environment, this was apparently normal so they were unable to help me.

In listening to the stories of my participants, I learned a lot about the many aspects of racism and the many ways that individuals chose to deal with racism. Some confronted racism head on, while others did their best to keep a positive attitude and keep moving forward in spite of the obstacles placed in their way by racist behaviors. In spite of the pressures of racism, all kept striving and growing and learning. In time we all became successful in our chosen fields.

"Whatever happens in life happens to make you stronger. So fear not, accept it as a gift from the universe. Use the event to capture the essence of this journey we call life."
--Debasish Mridha

Chapter Six: The Long and Winding Road

This chapter explores the subject of moving through a degree plan in a convoluted fashion. I have noticed a common thread in the lives of the majority of my research participants. Many, myself included, did not go straight through an academic career path like most "successful" people who are considered leaders in higher education. To many in mainstream society, this path appears to be the only acceptable path to being considered successful, qualified, and accomplished. In contract many of my research participants had journeys through life, that I will call, the "Long and Winding Road".

On this journey we went to work, we had children, got married, remarried, relocated, changed jobs, etc. But through it all we were led back to education. We often continued to work and volunteer our time to boards and commissions while we attended school or trainings. Although all of my research participants possess either advanced degrees and/or had received extensive training on the job, most had not achieved their highest level of expertise and responsibility in a direct route. While mainstream society does not look upon this type of career path in a favorable light, I will show that my participants were doing important and demanding work in between their time spent in an academic setting.

Jerry Danforth

I would like to first tell the stories of two of my participants who did have a more direct career route. Jerry Danforth and Loretta Metoxen both joined the military at a

young age. I will start first with Jerry. With his parents' permission, Jerry signed up for the Navy at the age of seventeen, while he was still in high school. After graduating from high school in 1965 he went directly to active duty in the Navy as the Vietnam War was occurring. When I asked why he enlisted he stated that he believed he would be drafted anyway and that when you enlist you are allowed to choose which branch of service you prefer. He preferred to be in the Navy, as many of his friends and relatives were in this branch of the military. Another reason he enlisted, as stated by Jerry, "It was always taught to me by my parents that it is a responsibility of all young men to serve their country in the military" (J. Danforth, Interview, 3/1/17).

While he was in the Navy he received extensive training over the years, starting out as a fireman which is an engineering designation. His rank started out at E1, which is the first level of the enlisted rank. He worked his way up the ranks to Chief, Senior Chief, and then Master Chief at E9. The rank of Master Chief is the highest level of the enlisted rating in the Navy. Each time he moved up in rank, he received technical training to assist him in his increased responsibilities. When he reached E4 he also started to receive training in leadership and management.

At times he held the rank of Command Master Chief and Force Master Chief. As there is often more than one Master Chief on a large ship, the Command Master Chief is the lead Master Chief and is the principal advisor to the ship Commanding Officer. With his duties as Force Master Chief he was the principal advisor to the Admiral in regards to all ships and commands in the Atlantic fleet surface force.

After thirty years in the Navy, Jerry retired and returned home to Oneida. In 1995 he was elected to the position of Tribal Judge for the judiciary department of the Oneida Tribe. He held this position until 1999. It was then that he was encouraged by members of the Oneida community to run for the office of tribal chairman. He ran and was elected and held this position for two terms. In all of his positions he received training related to his job, be it in the military or tribal service. There was only one time he attended a full semester as a regular full time student. It was at the University of Green Bay and he really enjoyed being a student. But with his election to tribal chairman in 1999, he ended his brief full time student status.

Loretta Metoxen

In the case of Loretta Metoxen, she also went into the military right after high school. Loretta had wanted to become a teacher but according to Loretta there were not many options on the Oneida reservation in the 1940s. At that time, a person could become a licensed teacher by attending two years of post -secondary school. Her desire to become a teacher was clearly remembered as she stated,

> I asked my dad if he could fund my going to normal school for teaching. We were between the house and the chicken coop when I asked him. Dad said he couldn't help. There were some scholarships available but the distribution of those scholarships were politically motivated by local politics, as the son of a banker was more likely to receive a scholarship, than someone who really needed it (Loretta Metoxen, Interview,4/28/14).

Loretta loved farming and aspired to be a farmer in her younger years. She was very involved in the family farm and her family relied on her especially as she was the oldest. So much so that she missed September of her junior year because her dad fell and she had to stay home and fill the silo. Some of her peers made fun of her for this. Her peers had support when they were in school but according to Loretta "I had to make my own way whatever it was (L. Metoxen, Interview, 4/28/14).

Like Jerry she also attended Seymour High School. While she didn't experience the level of racism that other participants did at this school, she did experience sexism. Seymour wouldn't let her attend agriculture classes because animal husbandry was taught. Animal husbandry involved the mating of animals, something Loretta would already be familiar with as a farm girl. But school administration would not allow her to attend because, I assume, her male teacher and peers would be uncomfortable with her female presence. Loretta graduated from Seymour High School when she was 17. Because her father would not support her becoming a teacher she decided to join the Air force. Her parents wouldn't sign so when she turned 18, she went to the recruiting office and signed up.

In 1950, Loretta joined the Air Force. She went from a school environment where she was not allowed to attend agriculture classes because of her sex to an all-male class in the air force as they needed Air borne technicians desperately. As stated by Loretta, "I got the highest grades and the men didn't appreciate it. I was a noncommissioned officer and eventually was in charge of all the radar at Biloxi Air Force Base."

After sixteen years in the military, Loretta returned to Oneida with her husband to raise her children, as she wanted them to know their extended family. She became heavily involved in tribal politics and tribal history. She held her first elected position with the tribal council in 1967. She stayed involved in tribal politics for the next twenty-nine years while raising her family and being a member of multiple civic and community organizations. As tribal history has always been a primary interest for her, she started working at the Oneida Cultural Center in 1996 as tribal historian. Over the years she has assisted in uncovering and documenting significant stories about the Oneida Tribe and its extensive history in Wisconsin. Although she is well past retirement age, she is still the tribal historian for the Oneida Tribe and has an office within the Oneida Cultural Heritage Department.

As stated previously, mainstream society often does not accept the long route to degree completion as a desirable trait. I was unaware of this until I had a discussion with my adviser, Dr. Tim Lensmire. Tim told me the following story when we were discussing the concept of the Long and Winding Road. After more discussion he later wrote down this experience for me. The following is taken from Tim's written account:

> I had been working with the chair of my department at diversifying our faculty. The chair asked me to meet with a group of search committee chairs (I think we had five or six searches for assistant professors going on that year) to talk with them about how to create a diverse applicant pool and about some of the things that could go wrong. All of the search committee chairs were White. I don't remember everything I said, but I do remember telling them that if they just

followed all the usual procedures, they would end up reproducing White supremacy. I don't think they were so pleased about my saying that. At one point, one of the search committee chairs looked at me and said, "Tim, if there were two equally qualified candidates, one White and one Black, I would have no trouble recommending we hire the Black candidate to diversify our faculty." I didn't know how to respond at the time, but eventually I realized that maybe she was telling the truth, but that for her, "equally qualified" did not mean the same thing as it did to me. For her, in order for Black candidates to be "equally qualified" to White candidates, they would have had to have gone to a "quality" undergraduate institution and then, even more importantly, a prestigious graduate school. Furthermore, "equally qualified" carried with it the idea that they went through these institutions and their degrees quickly, in a timely fashion. Whereas I might be looking for skills and accomplishments, she was looking for degrees at prestigious institutions finished quickly--meaning, that if you started further away from centers of power and prestige and if it took you longer to get to a certain place, then there was no way for you to be "equally qualified." This perspective, which I came to believe was quite widespread, obviously also often knocked out White candidates who came from poor and working-class families and communities, but given that people of color often start further from prestigious places and have fewer resources (and might take longer to finish any given degrees), then this perspective knocked out of consideration terrific candidates of color. (T. Lensmire, personal communication, 9/9/16)

The above account by Tim relates closely to the article by Kim & 0tts (2010) which states that there is a very high attrition rate for doctoral students of color and the attrition rate goes up as the time to completion increases. This article examines the differences between the time to graduation by gender and race. According to Kim and Otts, (2010):

> Variables such as gender, race, and family obligations influence time to degree. Males typically finish in less time than females when measured either by total time (which gauges elapsed time from completion of the baccalaureate degree through completion of the doctorate, including time periods during which the student may not be enrolled) or graduate time to degree which measures time elapsed since entry into graduate school (Abedi & Benkin, 1987; Hoffer et al., 2006). The median total time to degree in 2005 among all fields of study was 9.4 years for males, compared to 10.5 years for females (Hoffer et al.). Differences also exist in time to degree by race/ethnicity (Hoffer et al.). Asian students had the shortest total time to degree (8.8 years) in 2005, followed by Hispanic (10.3), White (10.4), American Indian (12.0 years), and Black (12.7) students (Hoffer, et al, 2006).

The above article contains some useful statistics and briefly examines some reasons for slower completion such as lack of financial support, family obligations, and full time employment. Since it is a more quantitative study, it does not go into depth in regards to what people are doing while working towards completion. Lacking this insight, it is easy for people to view slower completion as solely a negative factor. I have

reviewed similar articles and all state the negatives of slower completion to finishing a degree. By telling the story of some of my research participants in more detail, including my own story, I hope to describe the potential richness of the Long and Winding Road, which includes the journey to degree completion.

My Journey

As I have taken an extremely long time to complete my doctorate I can relate to the aforementioned article. I first started College at the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire in 1975. I was fresh out of high school and looking back now I realize how little guidance and mentoring I had for academic requirements. I remember registering for college in a gym at UWEC, sitting on the floor, with a catalog in one hand, and slips of paper for class registrations in the other. I was all by myself, amongst the crowd, and somehow I did get registered for the semester.

While I did not have academic guidance, I did receive cultural and social guidance from my new peers. They were American Indian students from many of the Wisconsin reservations and we bonded as a group. I was learning a lot about my identity as an American Indian person and participating in the American Indian student organization as vice president. But, I was not being a good student and my grades were not very good. Looking back now, I see that I was immature and wasn't certain about the direction my life should take. After two semesters, I withdrew from college, and came to Minneapolis to live with my dad and work. My goal was to get enough money together to get a one-way bus ticket to Akwesasne, New York. At the time Akwesasne Notes, was a leading newsletter in Indian country and was located close to the Oneida ancestral home

land. I wanted to go there and learn about my heritage. I had a volunteer job lined up at the Akwesasne newspaper.

After working at a retirement home for a short time, I was assisted by the America Indian Center in Minneapolis in finding a job. There was an opening at Heart of the Earth Survival School (HOTESS), an alternative school established by the American Indian movement in the mid-sixties as a response to perceived racism against American Indian students in the public school system. I ended up getting my first real job as an educator because, being at an alternative school, I did not need a teaching license.

I also learned at the same time that there was a huge American Indian population in the metro area and I soon became immersed in cultural, social and political action in regards to American Indian issues. I learned and I grew up, personally and professionally. In time I went back to school to compete my Bachelor's degree and I had a long career as a teacher with Saint Paul public Schools.

After many years of teaching I applied and was granted a Bush Fellowship the fall of 2005 to fund my return to school to work on my doctorate. I used the two years allowed by the fellowship to complete the majority of the course work, but I had to return to teaching to support myself. So there were many years that the degree was minimally addressed and some years that it was not addressed at all.

When you go on leave with Saint Paul Pubic Schools you are guaranteed a job when you return. Unfortunately, there is no guarantee what school or what grade that job will be in. After my two year leave funded by the Bush Fellowship, the administration asked me to list three choices that I would prefer for grade level. None of my choices

were granted and I ended up teaching Kindergarten in a school that was scheduled to be closed. Having never taught Kindergarten I found this job to be so difficult that I wonder to this day how I survived it.

The building was old and crumbling which I believe led to me being sick off and on for six months or more. It was important for me to work my way back to my school, the American Indian Magnet School (AIMS). I knew I had to get a good recommendation, so I was sure not to miss many days even though I was struggling with my health. In time I did get back to AIMS, but I continued to teach Kindergarten, which was very challenging.

Retiring from teaching, getting married, and moving away from the area I had lived in for over 25 years also contributed to keeping me from focusing on my doctorate. After more changes and in spite of being far removed from the world of academia I was determined to develop some momentum and I started to move forward slowly to complete my preliminary exams and start my research. I can see how, as stated by the authors, that the longer you take to complete the degree the more likely you are to drop out.

Louise Cornelius

The following will address the stories of two of my participants, Louise and Bill, and their Long and Winding Road through the education system and multiple careers which eventually led them to a variety of successful positions with high levels of responsibility. I will first relate my interview with Louise Cornelius.

I entered the main doors of the Oneida casino on my way to meet with Louise Cornelius, who is the General Manager of Gaming with the Oneida Tribe. I walked through the new section of the casino and went up the escalators to a very unassuming door. Upon entering the very nice office entryway I told the receptionist I had an interview with Louise. I had a brief wait until Louise came out to get me and brought me through a series of offices and hallways. As I entered her office I could see through the one-way glass down onto the main casino floor. The whole casino was lit up with more than the usual amount of flashing colored lights. She said "that's what happens when someone hits a jackpot." As we progressed through the story of her experience in public schools such as Chicago Corners and Seymour High School as related in another section. We progressed to discuss her schooling, life, and career beyond secondary education.

After Louise graduated from Seymour High School in 1975 she began work at Proctor and Gamble in 1976. She worked there for two years and hated it, as it was factory work and she saw that it held little future for her. Her experience with blue color work was very similar to Dr. Carol's experience with blue collar work in the pickle factory (Chapter Four). Before I share more about Louise's career path the following paragraphs will provide some basic background in regards to Oneida Tribal gaming and how it started with a small bingo enterprise, as tribal gaming is the career that has dominated Louise's professional life.

The first tribal bingo started in 1976 under Sandy Ninham and Alma Webster and was held at the Oneida civic center. The civic center is a small building with a gym which is used mainly for recreation but other events are held there to this day. The story of how

bingo started in Oneida, Wisconsin is a story by itself and it is interesting how Louise played a part in this very important endeavor. A book written by Mike Hoeft, The Bingo Queens of Oneida, (2014) chronicles how, under the leadership of Sandy and Alma, the bingo game grew from a small stakes game that assisted with paying the building light bill to a "vital enterprise that financed health care, education, social services and capital improvements on the Oneida reservation" (Hoeft, 2014, p.9).

In time the small enterprise at the civic center continued to grow and be successful. So much so that in 1982 a much larger facility was built and opened its doors in 1983. It was named the Irene Moore Activity Center, as Irene Moore was also instrumental in the development of the bingo enterprise and she was the first Oneida female tribal chairwoman (Hoeft, 2014). The building has been improved and expanded over the years and is one of the primary employers in Wisconsin with a minimum of three sessions of high stakes bingo every day of the week.

After leaving Proctor and Gamble, Louise assisted with the bingo at the civic center from 1978-1979. It was still a small operation and would eventually grow to be the first money maker on a reservation, where more than half the population lived in poverty and many had moved away because of the lack of employment opportunities. Louise worked as a bingo caller, floor worker, and eventually assistant building manager. Her involvement in this initially small enterprise would come to be the beginning of her gaming career.

In 1980 she moved to Milwaukee because she felt she "needed to do something with my life. I needed to get educated so I signed up for Milwaukee area technical

college. I went for a year and a half then I had a child. I stayed home and raised my son as a single parent" (L. Cornelius, Interview, 11/ 18/ 14). As related in other participant's stories, Milwaukee has a large population of Oneida people due to relocation and access to jobs. Because of this there has always been a lot of interaction in traveling back and forth from Oneida to Milwaukee and back again.

In 1985 Louise applied for a bingo hall supervisor position at the new Irene Moore Bingo Center (IMAC) and was hired. She moved back to Oneida and became the supervisor at the IMAC which was then high stakes bingo and has continued to grow to this day. She also was the gaming manager in the hotel which opened in 1985 until April, 1989. According to Louise,

> I had the experience on a small scale. At least small in comparison to where we are now. I knew this was the direction I wanted to go. I knew I had hit my passion in life. I went up the ladder in my career. It wasn't because of my education but because of my gaming knowledge and experience. 1n 1990 I was pursuing my bachelors but we were so busy developing that I moved slowly towards completion. I had a lot of mentorship in my life, and lots of training. 1n 1991 we signed our first gaming compact. This was a dynamic experience as I was a part of the historic negotiations of the first gaming compact of the Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin and the State of Wisconsin (L. Cornelius, Interview, 11/ 18/ 14).

The compact between the Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin and the state of Wisconsin can best be described as:

> a negotiated agreement between two political parties that resolves questions of overlapping jurisdictional responsibilities. What is negotiated in this contract is an extensive legal document that outlines the details in regards to how the Oneida tribe will conduct its gaming and how much of its generated revenue will be shared with the state. In return for the sharing of revenue the state has guaranteed that the tribe will have exclusive rights to this type of gaming in the state. A contract of this magnitude took at least six months for a team of tribal and state personnel to complete. (J. Danforth, personal communication, 3/1/17).

From 1990 to 1991 Louise was the Assistant Gaming Manager, then interim Gaming Manager and then held the position of Gaming Manager until 1999.

It was in 2001 that Louise resigned because she wanted to try something new in her life. She went to work for the National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA) from 2001-2002. While she was working for NIGA she was also a member of the Oneida Personnel Commission. This commission is appointed by the Oneida Business Committee to provide tribal employees an independent agency to appeal what they consider an unfair action by a supervisor. According to Louise, being a part of this commission helped her understand the process that tribal employees have when appealing an adverse employment action.

From there she moved into the position of the Gaming Commission for the Oneida tribe until 2009. As stated by Louise, “The Gaming Commission is the regulatory agency of the tribe in regards to all gaming enterprise in Oneida.”

There were many times in her career moving up the ladder where she was first the interim Director before she became the Director of a specific department. She was concerned about this happening more than once and she was advised by Oneida council woman, Julie Barton, that the only thing lacking in her life was a degree. She was encouraged to go back to school as she only had four classes needed to finish up. So she did finish in 2012 and is now pursuing her Master's degree.

Louise had a lot of training because schools did not offer what she needed to learn to do her job. She had to get training at Las Vegas conferences and seminars. A lot of training was also provided to Louise and her staff from a Las Vegas consultant who was hired by the tribe. He was very knowledgeable and assisted in the growth of the Oneida gaming development. Louise stated, "I tell you what you learn in this field is not what you learn in school."

Today, there are many institutions of higher learning that have degrees in gaming. Technical schools, community colleges, and tribal colleges often have programs that address gaming along with other aspects of the hospitality business. Training of this type was not available when Louise was working in the gaming and hotel business in the eighties and nineties.

In 2009 she was asked by then tribal chairman, Rick Hill to be Gaming General Manager. She accepted a contract offer and just recently began her seventh consecutive year. Today Louise is Gaming General manager of all gaming, for all properties on the Oneida reservation. She is also the only Oneida member of the Green Bay Chamber of Commerce which is mainly comprised of Caucasian men. I will close with a few

paragraphs from Louise that articulates Louise's passion and commitment to her work. According to Louise,

> My most dynamic experiences include the historic negotiations of the first gaming compact of the Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin and the State of Wisconsin. The second most rewarding experience was witnessing growth into Class III gaming. I also have a passion of the oversight and monitoring of three separate multi-million dollar building and expansion projects to our properties.
>
> My passion for Indian Gaming continues to escalate with enthusiasm. I personally execute my work performance with a watch on the trends and competition. The Executive Management operates by a business model we created and we have frequent strategic planning sessions to refresh and support our casino vision and mission. My personal business philosophy is my three 'C's, Communication, Customer Service, and Compliance" (L. Cornelius, Interview, 11/ 18/ 14).

Bill Gollnick

When I asked Bill to relate his school experience to me he started out stating that his view of school was formed by his mother's experience in school. She was one of 13 children and attended a Lutheran school in Wittenberg, Wisconsin. One day at school, she was locked up in the basement of the school during winter time for speaking her native language, which was Oneida. Her parents were brought into town and admonished for injuring their children by teaching them a "pagan" language. After that negative experience which certainly qualifies as a critical event she committed herself to never speaking her native language again. It is unfortunate that this type of experience was very

common across Indian country and has contributed to the endangerment of many American Indian languages. This type of negative school experience has resulted in historical trauma which has led to many American Indian languages being endangered or even extinct.

Bills earliest memories are of the family living in South Bend, Indiana where dad was building cars for Studebaker. Bills father died when he was two, so the family moved to Chicago as there were many relatives living in the same area due to the relocation program. Like many Oneidas living in urban areas, poverty was the norm and his family lived in a cold water basement apartment. There was no shower or tub so they had to shower at the park in the summer and use a washer tub in the winter. He attended public school in Chicago and remembers corporal punishment, frustration, and isolation as none of his classmates were Oneida. This situation remained fairly consistent through high school and he graduated in 1968. He remembers mainly black and white race issues and realizing he was neither, but more in the middle. He chuckled over memories of being nicknamed “savage” by his best friend or called “chief”. Otherwise his “Indianness” was unacknowledged.

After high school Bill enlisted in the Marines where he was once again one of a few American Indians in a larger group. He was honorably discharged from the service in 1970. After his service, Bill enrolled in a community college in Chicago. Community college also held no connection for him so he decided to go back to Oneida.

Bill was first able to feel truly connected with his culture when he went to college. After he left Chicago and went for Oneida he applied to the University of Wisconsin

Green Bay (UWGB). There he started out as a business major but did not feel a connection there. He then considered sociology but felt that would not meet his career plans either. He ended up choosing Social Change and Development which he described as a meaningful blend of many subject from business, political science, statistics, and sociology. This major was taught in an interdisciplinary manner and was meant to train students to effect change from within rather than from without.

Besides taking classes, he became very active in the UWGB American Indian student group. They called themselves, The Original People, (TOP) for short. The student organization was made up of sixteen students who were either Oneida or Menominee. Most were adult returning students that were commuters. As one example of the student population, Bill related the story of one outstanding student by the name of Christine Webster. Christine was a Menominee married to an Oneida. She raised her twelve kids went back to college and completed her B.A. then her Masters, and then served as a tribal judge for the Menominee Tribe.

After a few meetings the TOP organization changed its focus from a social opportunity to an activist organization. Goals were set to change courses and to recruit more students and get more pertinent classes. Bill became chairman of the student organization. As related by Bill,

> We took on the UWGB administration. We pushed for a Native house to bring people together and have a place that was theirs and we also pushed for UWGB to more actively recruit diverse students in general and American Indians in particular. The houses did not happen but we were given offices instead. The

> student organization took the position that if the university was not going to recruit then they would. If we could generate numbers, we could establish a stronger political base that would push us forward. After a year and a half, UWGB went from 16 students to over 100 students in 1972 (B. Gollnick, Interview, 2/4/17).

In 1973 the Oneida language program was developed at UWGB. The language program reached out to community organizations such as the Oneida Methodist church and received support. The language program started to make inroads. Some elders were enthusiastic while some were critical about who said the language right. This disagreement had its roots in Oneida history and related to the efforts of a Work Projects Administration, (WPA) grant that was instrumental in assisting with the preservation of the Oneida language and culture.

In 1936 a WPA grant was written and funded to interview fluent Oneida speakers and translate their stories. Floyd Lounsbury, a professor of anthropology/linguistics at Yale University was responsible for the initial implementation of this project. Lounsbury himself was not an Oneida Indian, but his linguistic leadership was critical in helping the Oneida WPA workers develop an orthography for the language (Campisi, 1981).

The stories and curriculum that developed through this project are used to this day. Some Oneida speakers used the phonetic system. There was disagreement between those who wanted to use the Lounsbury method and those who wrote phonetically. Amos Chrisjohn and Maria Hinton, brother and sister, were brought in to be language informants, and both became Oneida language leaders for the rest of their lives.

As this project grew and developed, Bill discontinued his education as an undergrad at UWGB and accepted a position as director of the Oneida language program with the tribe in 1974, the year he should have graduated. In 1977 the program received guaranteed grant funding for three years from Title 7. This funding allowed training in the Oneida language and participants would work as language teachers in local public schools.

Bill worked with other language supporters from the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council (GLITC). This organization is a consortium of the eleven Indian tribes in Wisconsin. The web site of GLITC states the history, purpose and goals of this organization as the following:

> GLITC was incorporated in 1965 with the purpose of providing a mechanism through which the tribes could work through the challenges of governance and services to their constituents. Through intertribal unity, the tribes could better develop and implement programs, seek outside assistance, and gain leverage in dealing with federal, state, and local government (Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, 2017).

By working together, a grant was developed, funded, and implemented so Native speakers from each of the native tribes in Wisconsin could be admitted to UWGB and enrolled in the teacher education courses. The speakers would not earn a full BA but the courses they completed would grant them a license from the Department of Public Education (DPI) to teach the language. A formal series of courses were also developed to increase language proficiency. The Oneida language program continued to grow and still

evolves to this day and has its own department within the tribe. The language is taught in the tribal schools and other locations and technology has since been used to develop even more curriculum.

Bill continued to support the development of the Oneida language, but he left his position with the language program to take a position at UWGB in 1977 as Director of the Educational Opportunity and Pre- Collegiate programs, a support position that assisted students in the creation of academic and life plans. Although he worked for UWGB he kept his ties with Oneida strong by being the Chairman of the Oneida Nation Education Committee (ONEC). He also continued to work at the planning office in Oneida in regards to nation building. While being chairman of ONEC he was offered a chance to apply at Harvard to pursue his Masters, which he accepted. Bill stated,

> we had started the Oneida elementary school in 1979 with a plan to add one grade per year for the following four years and cap the development with a community college. I chose the Master's degree in administration, planning, and social policy because as chairman of the Oneida Nation Education Committee, no one else in the tribe was qualified to administer such a plan, 'so off I went' (Bill Gollnick, Interview, 2/1/17.

When he was finishing his work at Harvard the school realized he was short a credit for a BA. In 1981 he finished his undergraduate and Master's at the same time. He graduated in 1981 with a Master's degree in Administration, Planning, and Social Policy. After graduating from Harvard, his expectation to work on Oneidas post-secondary growth was not fulfilled. Development had not occurred as planned, so there was no

position available for him. But shortly thereafter the school board chose to change school leadership, and Bill was hired as the school administrator, a position he held for five years. The Oneida tribe today has a Pre -K to 12 grade tribal school program but the hope to create a tribal college did not come to fruition.

When I remarked to Bill that I think I needed a flow chart to keep track of all his accomplishments and his career path. He laughed and stated,

> The flow chart for my life really does have a logic, it simply didn't have a plan. Each position I held gave me skills that somewhat prepared me for what came next, but the transitions were almost always externally driven. I chose to do things that connected with what the tribe needed at the time (B. Gollnick, Interview, 2/1/17).

In interviewing and writing about Bill and the theme of the Long and Winding Road I have discovered another facet to this theme. Besides working and returning to school in a convoluted fashion there is also a propensity for my participants to be involved in additional projects be it committees, task forces, or other agents of social, cultural, or political change. In Bill's case, while he was working and raising a family, he was also involved in multiple initiatives which demonstrated a high level of superior accomplishments. These initiatives were most often related to tribal language and culture, tribal government and sovereignty. The following paragraphs will detail some of his additional accomplishments.

From 1992 to 1995 Bill served as Assistant Chancellor at UWGB. In this job he directed multicultural programs, taught courses, and served on many committees while

keeping his ties and commitment to the Oneida nation and their initiatives. This job and his involvement in the UW system led to him being one of fifteen Presidentially-appointed professionals to the National Advisory Council on Indian Education. The role was to advise Congress and the White House on educational policy and related issues. He served on this council from 1994 to 1998 and this commitment overlapped with his subsequent appointment by Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson.

In 1995, Bill was appointed by Governor Thompson to be on the American Indian Language and Culture Education Board (AILCEB). He became Chairman of this board and worked as an education consultant for the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (WDPI). He worked with other team members in regards to reviewing public schools for compliance in academic standards including instruction on tribal governments. The instruction in tribal government standards came about because of the need for the passage of Act 31.

This crucial bill was passed in response to extreme racial prejudice against American Indians. In the 1980s there had been escalating tensions between Indians and non-Indians over the Ojibwe exercising their treaty rights. As the chair of the AILCEB, Bill worked especially close with the superintendent of WDPI, Bert Grover. These times were very tumultuous with verbal and physical harassment by Caucasians protesting the Ojibwe exercising their treaty fishing rights. This behavior was causing much potential for violence from both sides. In time, the AILCEB working with several legislators developed an initiative called Act 31, requiring study of Wisconsin Indian history,

culture, and tribal sovereignty in public schools. The 1989-91 state budget also appropriated funds for creation of an American Indian Studies program.

Bill worked with many individuals to accomplish the important goal of getting Wisconsin American Indian Education Act, (Act 31) and its many components enacted. According to Bill:

> our ability to get the Act 31 provisions was really possible because many of the arguments made by the various anti-Indian groups of the day were saying tribes didn't exist and if they did they didn't have jurisdiction, and they certainly didn't have treaty rights. We argued that the rhetoric and protests resulted from what a Seminole Episcopal Bishop ironically referred to as ignorance of ignorance. It wasn't that they didn't know. It was that they didn't know they didn't know. Convincing the governor and key members of the legislature that we could minimize the interpersonal relations by educating people about what was real. (B. Gollnick, Interview, 2/7/17)

Serving on these committees and many others provided Bill with skills in dealing with the federal system and the political process. These activities also aided in the development of foundational skills which prepared Bill for his five-year job as Director of Legislative Affairs for the Oneida nation. This job resulted in him representing the nation on capitol hill which educated him on the "process and the players". While lobbying for the tribe and working in conjunction with the National Indian Gaming Organization (NIGA) he traveled the country where gaming was evolving at a frenetic pace. As stated by Bill:

> singing the praises of Oneida's success, responsible development, political and economic sophistication, etc. to members of congress was helpful to the tribe and gave us the credibility to lead. We had gravitas and decision makers looking to us for policy recommendations. It was an exceptional time (Bill Gollnick, Interview, 2/7/17).

He held this position from 1997 to 2002 until strife at home and internal issues led Bill to feel he couldn't honorably represent Oneida, he resigned. He was encouraged to accept the position of General Manager of the tribe. He applied and was accepted and held this position from 2002 to 2007. As General Manager he managed five divisions with employees numbering approximately 1,700 persons. These were all governmental positions with the tribe and did not include gaming personnel.

The job as General Manager prepared Bill for his next job as Chief of Staff for the Oneida Nation. It was his last position with the tribe which he held from 2006 to 2011. Besides the typical chief of staff duties, Bill's job required him to work on the court case which Oneida has with the state of New York. This case goes back to the history of Oneida where land was illegally taken by the state of New York from what is now the Wisconsin Oneidas (see chapter two). The land claims work required Bill to negotiate with New York and with Wisconsin state and local governments and the coordination of nearly twenty committees and commissions. As stated by Bill, "I enjoyed the challenge. We were able to get agreements in place that eliminated the mistrust and political opposition, at least for a time. We made progress in a time of significant challenge." (Bill Gollnick, Interview, 2/7/17).

The year 2011, bought more political upheaval within the tribe and Bill's position was eliminated. At 62, Bill had worked for the tribe much of his adult life so he considered retirement. As you may have noted by reading about Bill, he is very dedicated to the Oneida Nation. Bill related his fondest memories to me:

> Among the years spent working in Oneida, driving the gravel roads with clouds of dust behind me and every other car. Waving at everyone coming the other direction because you know them, greeting everyone one with seku kyase (hello cousin), joining the tribe's four employees and planning for the tribes impending development. Those are among my most pleasant memories. (Bill Gollnick, Interview, 2/7/17).

And then he received a call. It was from the chairwoman of a newly federally recognized tribe in California. The Tejon tribe had two employees and needed to restore their government and get policies and programs developed for their people. Bill has worked for the Tejon people now for five years assisting them in developing their nation. Bill loves this work and he is very appreciated and well treated by the Tejon people.

Summary

I perceive all of my participants as very accomplished and successful people. Three out of four of my individuals in this chapter have provided service to their country through their presence in the military. All four have provided support to Indian country in general and the Oneida Nation in particular. The majority of all my participants have lived their professional life in a nonlinear fashion but yet all are very accomplished and have been involved in a multitude of projects related to their work and or interests.

I did not tell the stories of Janice and Kirby in this section but they also have had a long and interesting journey through schools, trainings, and employments. Both are very successful as Janice is the president of the Oneida Airport Hotel Corporation for the Oneida tribe of Wisconsin. Kirby is currently a Business Committee Councilman for the Oneida tribe of Wisconsin. Both positions are prestigious yet they are also demanding and require a massive commitment to growth and excellence.

Except for the exceptions of Jerry and Loretta, all of my participants who pursued higher education, did not complete their degree in a timely linear manner. I'm sure they would not be considered quality candidates for employment by those that share the views of the interview committee as related by Tim Lensmire. I view this as short sighted and a disservice to the many individuals who attend school, raised families, and volunteered their time for worthy causes. One could even see these views as a form of institutional racism. The telling of their stories seeks to show that the reasons for not completing a degree in a timely manner are much more complex and perhaps important and valuable.

You never know when it is going to happen, when you will experience a moment that dramatically transforms your life. When you look back, often years later, you may see how a brief conversation or an insight you read somewhere, changed the entire course of your life. –Gay Hendricks

Chapter Seven: Inspirations

The third theme that emerged from the interviews with my participants was "Inspirations." In defining the term Inspirations, I am examining factors that motivated each participant to graduate from high school, factors that motivated them to continue their long journey, build their career, and continue their education, in higher education or training. I will first examine and compare the stories of Janice and Louise. I will then relate the remainder of my participant's stories, which will include my own story.

This theme has many different aspects, positive and negative. The inspirations were often generated by a person or an event. Many times the inspiration to strive for success came from a person such as a parent, another adult, and sometimes a peer. In other instances, an event or person that generated a negative feeling propelled the participant to excel. With some participants, it was a personal drive to move up the ladder in their career. With others, whether directly spoken or not, it was an expectation instilled by parents that they must graduate. Often, inspirations were multifaceted, as in the case of Dr. Carol's story. In spite of poverty, low expectations from her teachers, and being surrounded by racism, her "love of learning" helped propel her to succeed. Her desire to not do blue collar work in the local pickle factory encouraged her to return to higher education and complete an accounting degree. She grew up where American Indians were treated as second class citizens and she simply refused to accept that. Her

aunt, Dorothy Davids, a leading educator in Wisconsin, became her mentor and in time, Carol too became a leader in education.

Factors that inspired my participants to complete or continue their education were introduced in two previous chapters. In this chapter I will delve deeper and in greater detail as it pertains to the theme of Inspirations. As I have done in the other chapters, I will seek to "look for the "stories within the stories." As stated by Schaafsma and Vinz (2001): "This process of analysis involves placing stories alongside each other, alongside one's own story, and finding the larger story behind an initial story" (p.72). When possible I will determine and examine connections between my participant's stories, including my own story.

I will begin by telling the inspiration stories of Janice, Louise, and Loretta in greater detail. I will follow with the stories of the remainder of my participants in lesser detail. I will conclude this chapter with my own story as it relates to what inspired me.

Janice

The story of Janice and how she was inspired to strive and excel throughout her life will be detailed in the following. As mentioned previously, Janice grew up in Oak Creek, a small city outside of Milwaukee. She was the youngest in her family, so during high school years, her older siblings were either in the military or away at boarding school. School was not difficult for her, but she didn't do well academically and considered school boring. In spite of this, she continued in school and graduated in 1968. Janice attributes some fault for her poor grades to her teachers, but more so, that she was very social, liked to have fun, and did not take school very seriously.

A major hardship and critical event for Janice was losing her dad when she was a sophomore in high school. During the interview, this event and the difficulty of losing her dad was mentioned more than once without prompting. The close relationship Janice had with her dad was illustrated when she told me about how her dad would take her along with him while he worked and how this experience assisted in developing her interest in business. As stated by Janice,

> Dad had an asphalt business. And he went residential to commercial I would go with my dad in his semi because I was the youngest. He would say, draw a square, draw a rectangle, put a 1 and a 6, not knowing it was 16 feet and put a 2 and a 4 on the other side, I not knowing it was 24 feet. He would always check my work and he was very patient with me. I would sit in the truck and I'd hear him do his sales because the windows were down. I just grew up with him in business, I knew his customers, his bankers, because I was always with him. I have him to thank for the drawing. As I got older I got more elaborate with the drawing and I knew what I was doing. I was very close to my dad, more so than the others. Yeah losing him was sad. It was very sad losing Dad (J. Hirth, Interview, 10/15/14).

When Janice was in high school, her siblings were older and were out of the home so she felt very isolated. As stated by Janice, "I just didn't care. My Dad was gone, my siblings were gone, and my Mom worked all the time. I was really alone." It was Janice's friend, Linda who helped her do her homework. Linda was very involved in academic events and was very responsible in doing her school work and eventually became

valedictorian. Linda would work with Janice on her homework and would always encourage Janice to do her best. Linda and another friend, Bruce, drove Janice around, as she did not have her own transportation. “It was my friends; it wasn’t an adult. I had some friends who would take me the other way but Linda would reel me back in.” Janice stayed close with many of her school friends and they still communicate to this day.

As mentioned in Chapter Five, Mr. Smith, the principal of her high school, took an interest in Janice and made sure to look out for her best interests. As stated by Janice,

> Mr. Smith, the principal, would call me in when he would be concerned about my grades. He would let me know if my grades were to low or if there were concerns over too many absences. Things that I liked I got A’s in, things I did not like, I got D’s. Mr. Smith would say “I know you can do it.” He would tell me also, “Janice if you have too many absences you can’t graduate, no matter how good your grades.” You couldn’t have more than 30 absences to graduate so he would call me in and say Janice you now have 20 absences. He didn’t want me to fail. I don’t think it was because I was a minority. I felt because I came from good family. He knew we always went to church. He knew we lost our dad. He knew my family. He knew my brother and sister were in the service. He knew my mom was a hard working minimum wage laborer (J. Hirth, Interview, 10//14/14).

Janice’s Godparents, Frank and Grace Baird, were also a positive influence in her life. They didn’t have any children and Janice was their first god child. Frank and Grace were both very influential in the Milwaukee urban Indian community. They were involved in promoting and participating in youth activities in sports and

American Indian culture. They were very close with Janice's family. As she states, "They took me everywhere. We went to church and they went on vacations with us. They were always a big part of our lives."

In listening to Janice's story it is clear that she had many people who supported her and who provided excellent role modeling through different stages of her life. It is clear by listening to her that, in spite of hardships, her positive attitude and personal drive combined with the support of friends and family, contributed to her growth and success. She has had a long career in business and is currently the President of the Oneida Airport Hotel Corporation. This job has massive responsibilities and includes overseeing the Radisson Hotel and other significant businesses owned by the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin.

Louise Cornelius

Louise Cornelius is the General Manager for all the Oneida casinos. Her office is inside the administration section of the Radisson Hotel. The Radisson is also attached to the tribe's largest casino. Today, Louise and Janice, work in close proximity to each other, but had very different lives growing up. In spite of that, there are interesting parallels that arise in looking at both of their stories. The inspirations for Louise were first stated in Chapter Five. Her father was very influential in her life. He was very strict and was the boss at his job. He was also very involved in sports, was a volunteer coach, and instilled sports in all his children. Louise remembers him saying, "NONE OF YOU ARE GOING TO FAIL!" As stated by Louise, "A lot of the discipline in my life came from being an athlete. My father was very disciplined. He demanded respect."

Louise's mother worked in a manufacturing company, and before that, in domestic labor at rich people's homes in De Pere, as many other Oneida women did during this time frame. Louise described her mother as a simple person, not educated, and very spiritual.

Louise and Janice grew up in very different environments as Louise grew up on the Oneida reservation and Janice grew up in a city close to Milwaukee. Louise had support and balance provided by her two parents, extended family, and the close community of reservation life. The negatives for Louise were dealing with racism in the community and in school. Janice was more isolated at times, but had a lot of peers, God parents, and friends that supported and encouraged her to excel in and outside of school. Janice grew up in a more diverse setting which she appreciated and did not let racism affect her well- being. In spite of growing up in totally different settings, one thing in common, is that they both called Oneida "home."

An interesting parallel is their own personal drive to excel in their careers, which led them back to school. As stated by Louise, in Chapter Six, there were many times when she was moving up the ladder in her career that she had to prove herself first in interim director positions before she could become the director of a specific department. She was concerned because this happened more than once. She was advised by Oneida Council woman, Julie Barton, that the only thing lacking in her career was a degree. She was encouraged to go back to school, as she only had four classes remaining to finish her BA, which she ultimately completed in 2012. She is now pursuing her Master's degree.

This is very similar to Janice's situation in that she learned of a new position in the tribe and she went to work for the tribe as an Assistant General Manager (AGM), and that's when she went back to school for her BA. After achieving her Bachelor's degree, she went back for her Master's degree. According to Janice,

> It was a personal drive after I got my BA. It was something I always wanted to do, to have higher education, because I never really felt qualified, education wise, to take the General Manager (GM) jobs, and I wouldn't, so I was interim GM for 3 years. I refused to apply for GM because I didn't feel I had the school credentials to serve in that capacity. My personal drive was that if I wanted to move up I needed more education. (J. Hirth, Interview, 10/14/14).

Janice and Louise are both unique individuals and some interesting parallels occurred in their stories. As stated previously in spite of very different back grounds growing up in later years they ended up working in close proximity to each other and at times working on the same projects or projects that complimented each other. An example being that the Radisson Hotel and the Oneida Casino are both Oneida Tribal enterprises and both are two of the top five employers in Wisconsin.

Loretta Metoxen

My eldest participant was Loretta Metoxen. She graduated from high school in 1950. Each time that I talked with Loretta she had a wealth of information that she shared with me, from her attendance at grade school to her time in the military and her subsequent careers afterwards. Although she is well past retirement age, she is still

employed as the tribal historian for Oneida. She is very active in the Oneida community, especially in activities that pertain to veterans.

Loretta's mother was Oneida and her father was Polish. Loretta was able to list every school she attended from Allouez and Elmore school in Green Bay for first through third grade. Once the family moved to Oneida she attended Silvery Summit Grade School on the Oneida reservation and Saint Joseph's Catholic School on the reservation. For high school she attended West DePere for two years and then Seymour High School for her junior and senior years.

She liked school and said that her mother taught her reading well before she went to school. Loretta stated: "I remember Dick and Jane etc. My mother made sure we had Longfellow, Alcott, etc. Mother bought books and she had a subscription to National Geographic. Dad got farm magazines." (L. Metoxen, Interview, 4/49/14)

Loretta attended third and fourth grade at Silvery Summit. It was a public school, a two room school that housed grades 1-8. There was one teacher who made a positive impression on Loretta as she is remembered strongly to this day, an Oneida woman named La Pearl Powless. She lived in the area and walked to school every day. La Pearl may have been one of the reasons that Loretta wanted to become a teacher in her later years. Loretta stated, "I remember La Pearl walking to school in her rubber boots. When she had to leave the room she would assign me to read to the room. Some didn't like her because she was too strict. She had to keep control and teach all subjects. That's where I got my educational grounding from. La Pearl, she had it all."

Like all schools during that time period, the curriculum was very Eurocentric. Although the student population was more than 95 percent Oneida, Oneida history and culture were not taught. This was the norm during this time period. As Loretta stated, "We had a picture of the Angeles by Monet and The Gleaners hanging on the wall. We learned the history of those pictures. We learned about geography and the Belgian Congo. We read Snow-Bound and other classics. We learned about Greek mythology and the Hanging Gardens of Babylon." Loretta spoke extensively of her class activities and projects and it is obvious that she had a "love of learning" that was similar to Carol's "love of learning." As stated in Carol's story, her love of learning was one of the positive beliefs that promoted her excellence in school.

Loretta needed glasses in the third grade, but her family couldn't afford to get them for her until eighth grade, when the Johnson O' Malley program was able to offer assistance (see appendix). In spite of visual disadvantage, as stated by Loretta," I still got straight A's. I graduated from 8th grade in 1946. This was a big deal because kids could legally quit school once they completed eighth grade. I wanted to continue."

Loretta had a lot of responsibility at a young age, as her dad lost an arm in a mill accident in 1941, when he was 38. Her family lived in Green Bay until she was nine years old and this accident occurred. Her dad received a cash settlement from the industrial commission of Wisconsin. With that cash settlement he paid cash for a farm on the second ridge, which is now called, Seminary Road on the Oneida reservation. He bought a herd of cattle, a team of horses, all implements and the farm itself.

With purchasing the farm, the family moved to the Oneida reservation and became a farming family. According to Loretta, “My Dad, taught me ‘how to be a boy.’ I was the oldest and I was full grown at 13. I had to do all the hard farm work. Dad taught me how to use tools and how to build fences. I loved it. I loved that farm.”

Loretta’s mother was a positive role model in regards to education, as she provided books for Loretta at a young age and taught her how to read before she was old enough to attend school. But at the same time, her mother was a product of her times and reinforced the gender roles and the service roles that were very commonly reserved for Oneida people. Loretta wanted to take chemistry, science, and higher math classes in high school, but her mom made sure she took shorthand and typing so that she would have these skills to fall back on. Loretta’s father was a positive role model in regards to promoting a powerful work ethic within her, but he apparently did not see the true value of education beyond eighth grade. When Loretta was a sophomore, at West De Pere High School, her father wanted her to stay home and work the farm. He promised her new clothing if she would do so.

Loretta stated that the teachers at high school were good to her and supported her in attending school. Mr. Lewis was the superintendent in West De Pere. When Mr. Lewis learned about her father wanting her to stay home and work the farm, he encouraged her to stay in school. As stated by Loretta, “Mr. Lewis said, ‘If you have one dress, and have to wash it out every day, you come to school.’ I kept my own clothes up and I never told my dad about that conversation.”

For her junior and senior year Loretta attended Seymour High School. She missed September of her junior year because her dad fell and hurt himself and she had to stay home and fill the silo. Her peers made fun of her because of this. Her peers had support when they were in school, but according to Loretta, "I had to make my own way whatever it was." In spite of teasing by her peers, Loretta was an independent person and did not harbor negative feelings towards her peers, as she still keeps in touch with those who are still alive and living in the area. She also attends her annual class reunions.

As a young woman, Loretta had aspirations to be a farmer. For a school project she wrote a letter on how she wanted to be a farmer. She already knew a lot about being a farmer as she was running the family farm at a young age. In spite of this, Seymour High School wouldn't let her attend the classes in agriculture. As stated by Loretta in Chapter Five, "They wouldn't allow me to go because the class was all boys and animal husbandry was taught."

Loretta also had aspirations of becoming a teacher. She wanted to attend what was then called normal school and become a teacher. You could attend school for two years and become a teacher. As remembered by Loretta, "I asked my Dad if he could fund my going to normal school for teaching. We were between the house and the chicken coop when I asked him. Dad said he couldn't help." At that time, there were few scholarships available and what was available was typically politically motivated, as the scholarships were not based on financial need.

When Loretta graduated high school in 1950, she was 17. At this time there was very little economic opportunity on the Oneida reservation. Her father was still running

the farm, and being denied an opportunity to further her education, she decided to leave Oneida. She went the same route that many other Oneida people did; she joined the military. The majority of Oneidas who joined the military were men, but Loretta being an independent, strong minded woman followed her own path. Her parents wouldn't sign for her to enlist, so when she turned 18, she went to the recruiting office and signed up.

Loretta had multiple challenges and encouragements along the way. Some mixed support from parents and more support from some of her teachers. La Pearl Powless was an inspiration for her at a young age and by listening to Loretta speak about you it is obvious that she admired La Pearl. La Pearl was most likely a motivating factor in Loretta wanting to go into the teaching profession. The principal at De Pere was also influential as he encouraged Loretta to keep coming to school in spite of material enticements from Loretta's father. I believe her strongest motivation was herself as she had responsibilities at home yet kept her grades up at school. She is still a leader in the community and a voice of reason when controversial issues are discussed publicly within our tribe.

Kirby Metoxen

I will address the inspirations for the rest of my participants in the following paragraphs and I will begin with Kirby Metoxen. Kirby is one of the newly elected council members for the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin. Kirby is a long time member of the Oneida reservation community but still maintains his ties with the urban Indian population in Milwaukee. He has had encouragement from the closeness of his family in Milwaukee and Oneida, but wrestled with his shyness throughout much of his life. When

meeting Kirby today, a person would never know about his struggles with being an introvert, as he conveys a professional calm demeanor. He also comes across as very social and friendly and there are many times he needs to get up and speak in front of a crowd, which he does very well.

He began to blossom in seventh grade when he was nominated to be on student council. He spoke fondly of an elder Menominee lady, Evelyn, who was a home school liaison for the American Indian students at his school. This is the same kind of work that Carol did in Green Bay and similar to my kind of work with Indian Education in Saint Paul, Minnesota. Evelyn was always there to help and provide support, be it a pencil or a voucher to purchase school clothing. As stated by Kirby she provided a safe haven for him and other students. She also encouraged him to run for student council when he was in ninth grade. He became vice president and discovered that he enjoyed speaking up for others. As stated by Kirby, "I didn't realize the impact it would have on me."

Another inspiration for Kirby was his older brother, Kelly. As stated in Chapter Four, Kelly was Kirby's "saving grace" because he was a tough guy who liked to fight, but always made sure to look out for his younger brother, Kirby. Kelly was sent to a juvenile detention center for skipping school, drinking, and a variety of misdemeanors. According to Kirby, Kelly said, "Don't ever screw up Kirby, you would never make it in prison." He said that because he knew Kirby was an easygoing, non- confrontational type of person. That advice combined with seeing the majority of his American Indian classmates drop out of high school encouraged him to graduate.

Jerry Danforth

Jerry Danforth is semi-retired, a thirty-year veteran of the US Navy and, is a former chairman of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin. He stated that his inspiration to graduate was an expectation instilled in him by his parents. Both his parents had a strong work ethic which they passed on to Jerry. His mother had performed domestic labor as a young woman, but in time she became employed by the state employment department, helping veterans and American Indian people find employment. His father worked hard all his life at various jobs, and then was employed at the local paper mill. They both retired after long careers. Jerry himself did seasonal farm labor as a youngster, which involved working long hours at physically demanding work.

Jerry enlisted in the US Navy while he was seventeen and still in high school. Unlike today, it wasn't a requirement of the navy that he graduate, but he did so because of his parent's expectations and his own solid work ethic. As discussed in Chapter Six, Jerry made a thirty-year commitment to a career in the navy and received technical training and management/leadership training as he moved up the enlisted ranks.

In the mid-seventies, the Navy started to place significant emphasis on higher education, in addition to technical and leadership training to enhance individual promotion potential. This encouraged Jerry to complete college courses at six colleges and universities that were available at the various duty stations that he was assigned to:

> I believe that the work ethic I learned as a young boy doing seasonal farm work, coupled with Navy technician training and leadership/management trainings, and ultimately formal college education, created the path and inspiration to become a

> Command Master Chief on three navy warships and ultimately the Atlantic Surface Force Master Chief. This position was one of twelve of the highest ranking Master Chief positions in the US Navy (J. Danforth, Interview, 4/4/17).

Bill Gollnick

Bill Gollnick grew up in Chicago. He had the closeness of some relatives in his neighborhood but was very isolated at school, as he was often the only American Indian in his class. He stated how issues regarding race were often Black and White issues and he felt stuck in the middle, as he was neither. As one reads his story in Chapter Six it becomes clear that his commitment to family and his commitment to the Oneida Nation inspired him to continue to excel in his career. Bill was first able to feel truly connected with his Oneida culture when he attended college at the University of Wisconsin Green Bay (UWGB). His initial commitment to UWGB helped him to grow socially, culturally, and academically. This activity sparked his interest in the revitalizing of American Indian languages in general and the Oneida language in particular. His commitment to UWGB and the Oneida tribe led him to become involved in even more meaningful and challenging commitments throughout his career.

When I commented on the many different paths on which his career had led him, he stated, “The flow chart for my life really does have a logic, it simply didn’t have a plan. Each position I held gave me skills that somewhat prepared me for what came next, but the transitions were almost always externally driven. I chose to do things that connected with what the tribe needed at the time.”

My Inspirations

As to my personal experiences, in first writing about inspirations, I could not think of what inspired me to develop in my career and to continue with higher education. It has truly been a mystery to me and I did not look forward to writing about this theme in regards to myself. However, in writing about my participants' stories, and what inspired them, I have finally gained some insight into my own inspiration. In thinking back on my days in high school, I remember that my mother expected me to graduate. She also expected me to go to college right after high school, which I did. She was not pushy about this expectation, but I knew it was there. My father was absent from our lives, so the inspiration to graduate came solely from my mother. The situation with my mother is similar to Jerry's inspiration, in that he knew his parents expected him to graduate.

Also, I wrote previously about my first job at Heart of the Earth Survival School in Minneapolis, Minnesota. It was an alternative school first started by the American Indian Movement in the 1960s. Being an alternative school there were many non-credentialed teachers working there and I was one of them. I was the Title One teacher and I was in charge of the reading and math labs for the school. I worked very hard and enjoyed my job, but I was often told by administration that I could be better paid, if I had my degree and was a licensed teacher. This is somewhat similar to Louise and Janice's situation, in that we all were working demanding jobs without having the formal training provided by higher education. As Louise and Janice felt inspired to return to school, I also returned to school, and eventually graduated with a BA and a teaching license.

Later in my career, when I was working at the American Indian Magnet School, I was discussing my pay- check with some of my colleagues who were also educators. We all came to the consensus in our discussion that I needed to get more education if I wanted to move up the pay scale. So I started working on my Master's degree, and since I was still a single parent working full time, I took one class each semester and extra classes in the summer. Eventually, I graduated and moved up the pay scale as a teacher. Much later in life I returned to school to pursue my doctoral degree.

There was a wide range of people, activities, or factors that inspire these study's research participants to grow in career and education. This wide range created some interesting parallels along with unique stories in this chapter. The most common positive motivation to succeed was provided to most of my participants by their parents and/or other family members. The support of a school principal or another school professional was provided to four of my participants. A "love of learning" was an inspiration for two of my participants. A negative motivator, "an escape, from poverty" was stated by one participant. Otherwise the inspirations were of a positive and supportive nature.

All of the participants had in common, the character traits of strength, resiliency, and determination as they all had challenges to address and conquer as they moved through life.

Conclusion

A Summary

This study told the stories of six Oneida people, all of whom attended public or parochial schools. Their stories, were collected through the use of face-to-face interviews, and were analyzed using the research methodologies of narrative inquiry and autobiography. Autobiography is used as my own story is at times told alongside my research participants' stories.

Dhunpath (2000) states that "Narrative research is dedicated to celebrating the voices of the silenced. But more than that it celebrates biography as an authentic reflection of the human spirit, a mirror to reflect visions of our other selves" (p.550). This statement defines narrative research as especially appropriate for use with marginalized populations, such as Indigenous people. Throughout history, American Indians have been "silenced," largely because many important decisions were made for them through treaties and federal policies, that the mainstream population were not subjected to. As such, narrative inquiry is very fitting and appropriate for this dissertation which addresses the school stories of Oneida people.

In analyzing my participants' stories, I laid the stories side by side, including my own. As a researcher, I strove to look for the "stories within the stories," as stated by Schaafsma and Vinz (2001). This process of analysis involves placing stories alongside each other, alongside one's own story, and finding the larger story behind an initial story. For example, at times, I told two or more of my participants stories next to each other. An example of this is in chapter five where I told Jerry and Louise's stories in the same

section. Both grew up in Oneida, attended Chicago Corners and Seymour Schools, and they both experienced racism. The difference in their stories was a ten-year age difference and ten-year time frame difference. The type of racism they experienced, and how each reacted to the racism they experienced was another difference.

This study used open-ended flexible questions to examine the experiences of Oneida Indians who have attended non-federal schools within and without the reservation boundaries. Participants were encouraged to elaborate when and where they felt a need. The only question consistently used for every interview was the first question, which was: "if you were to relate a story of your experience in school, what story comes to you?" I used this question as a beginning to help clarify that I wanted individuals to feel free to tell me their story and for them to know that I believed their story was important. I had a list of subsequent questions to be asked if needed but they were rarely needed as the information I was seeking emerged naturally from the participants as they told me their stories.

The data analysis was also inspired by critical event narrative analysis. Webster and Mertova (2007) use critical event narrative analysis to probe the research participants understanding of the complexities involved in the topic area. They assume narrative "is an event driven tool of research" and as such, "events are critical parts of people's lives and using them as a main focus for research provides a valuable and insightful tool for getting at the core of what is important in that research" (p.71). I could see critical events interspersed throughout the stories of my participants. One example which was described in Chapter Five was the Milwaukee race riots of 1967. The Milwaukee riots were part of

a nationwide critical event that caused major unrest and caused critical events in the lives of four of my participants.

My interest in this subject was generated by my interest in the boarding school experience and its harmful practices of using the education system as a vehicle for forced assimilation which focused on children, the most vulnerable of the American Indian population. I have been intrigued by reading the accounts of those who have attended boarding schools and concerned about the historical trauma generated by this type of "colonial education" which affects many American Indian people to this day. I do not believe there is an overabundance of boarding school stories, but I have always been interested in the American Indian experience in non-boarding schools, especially public or parochial schools. As never enough can be said about the stories of boarding schools, even less has been said, about the personal experiences and stories of Oneida people in the public school system.

I interviewed six Oneida individuals, three men and three women. The participants ranged in age from 50 to 80 years old. Each of them had unique and rich stories with commonalities and interesting parallels that became apparent as the interviews were transcribed and analyzed. From the data gathered in these interviews there emerged three main themes, Racism, The Long and Winding Road, and Inspirations.

I told Dr. Carol's story in its entirety because of the richness and interesting parallels her story contained. In time, I discovered that all my participant's stories were rich and intriguing, so I decided to change my manner of documenting the stories. I

decided to compare and analyze my participants' stories by dividing them into the three identified themes. I did this so I could better incorporate a comparative analysis by noting similarities and differences in individual experiences and better incorporate "critical reflection."

Racism in school and in their communities was something all of my participants experienced and is addressed in the chapter Recollections of Racism. The Long and Winding road addresses and provides insight in regards to the propensity for many of my participants to have taken a longer time to complete higher education than is the norm in mainstream society. How mainstream society does not look favorably on this propensity is also examined in this chapter. Inspirations is addressed because all were inspired in various ways to achieve their educational goals.

In the chapter, Recollections of Racism, each of my participants taught me different things about how racism is expressed as all of my participants experienced racism in their schooling of one type or another. For Janice it had critical significance, in that she experienced a racist incident at school, which was ignited by the post tensions of the Milwaukee race riots. Kirby experienced racism that was rooted in ignorance and was hurtful and shaming. For Louise, racism involved systemic racism, and a feeling of being treated as less important than others who were White. Jerry's experience with racism involved blatant in-your-face name calling and physical aggression. Dr. Carol experienced racism in many forms during her entire life. Racism made such an impact, that she became a professor in higher education, to teach teachers how to teach and learn about other cultures in a respectful manner. For myself, racism touched me in all of the

aforementioned ways. But what ran deepest was the isolation and loneliness of being in a racist environment and not having the support or even basic knowledge of an Oneida community

In the Long and Winding Road Chapter, I perceive all of my participants as very accomplished and successful people. The majority of my participants have lived their professional lives in a nonlinear fashion and all are very accomplished and have been involved in a multitude of projects related to their work and or interests. I learned by researching and writing this chapter that mainstream society does not look favorably on the propensity to not complete a formal academic degree in a timely manner. The telling of their stories seeks to show that the reasons for not completing a degree in a timely manner are much more complex and perhaps even more, important and valuable.

The final theme addressed was Inspirations. There was a wide range of people, activities, or factors that inspired the research participants to grow in their career and education. This wide range created some interesting parallels along with unique stories in this chapter. The most common positive motivation to succeed was provided to most of my participants by their parents and/or other family members. The support of a school principal or another school professional was provided, to four of my participants. A “love of learning”, was an inspiration for two of my participants. A negative motivator, “an escape, from poverty” was stated by one participant. Otherwise the inspirations were of a positive and supportive nature and all participants had more than one factor that inspired them. All of the participants possessed character traits that assisted them in becoming accomplished individuals.

Implications who might your work be important for

I believe the stories of my participants are important because their stories provide valuable insight into the experiences and challenges of American Indian people as they navigated through life in general, and more specifically, the public school system. I learned, and I hope others would note how national events and legislation impacted the lives of my participants, including myself. Legislation such as the Relocation Act, the Termination Policy, and Wisconsin Act 31, affected the lives of my participants. Legislation such as the Johnson O' Malley Act and the Title VII, Indian Education Act, were also a part of the school stories, for some of my participants.

Many in mainstream society are unaware of how policies and decisions have been made for American Indians, primarily by the federal government, only until more recently American Indians have been able to become positive change drivers. It is important that mainstream America learns that the freedoms that many take for granted, are freedoms that Indigenous people have had to continuously fight for.

The basic background on American Indian education provided in this dissertation is critical knowledge for all educators, especially those who work with American Indian people, whether children or adults. The history of American Indian education is a unique and bitter story that is not taught in mainstream schools, even at the college level. There have been many times as a graduate student at the University of Minnesota (UMN) that my required classes in Curriculum and Instruction did not address the subject of boarding schools or other important issues related to American Indian education, when it would have been appropriate to do so. As the only American Indian student in class, I was put

into the position of being the spokesperson for my race. I knew if I did not speak up the subject(s) would have been left unaddressed.

Another reason that this knowledge is important is that there have been too many times as an educator that I have overheard non-Indian teachers judging American Indian parents as being unsupportive and/or uninvolved. Maybe if they knew more about the negative history of colonial education, it would help them better understand why many American Indian people are not comfortable in a school setting.

I have also heard teachers and other professionals who work with American Indian students ridicule a student for not being able or willing to explain certain aspects of their heritage. Many American Indian people do not know their culture or traditions because of forced assimilation and other factors. Also, not everyone is comfortable being the spokesperson for their race. Maybe, if non-Indians knew that many American Indians have had their culture taken from them through forced assimilation, they would hopefully be more understanding.

Possibilities for Future Research

I would like to expand on this study by including the stories of younger individuals and see how their stories compared to older individuals. The age range in this study was from 50 years old to 80 years old. How might the stories of millennials and Generation X, compare and relate? I expect there would be many changes due to the use of today's technologies but in regards to human interactions I would like to see what has changed, and what has not.

In the background research for this dissertation, I addressed the growth of American Indian self-determination in general, and more specifically in the area of education. The growth of tribally controlled schools across the nation is significant and is a prime indicator of American Indian educational self-determination. However, the degree of tribal control varies by tribes and is a complex issue. I would like to study tribal schools, more specifically the Oneida Tribal schools. Examination of the school curriculum, climate, mission statements, goals and day to day operation would be important to note. More important would be to examine the degree of self-determination and local control that are truly present in the Oneida Tribal schools.

Table 1- Definition of Terms

Critical, Like and Other

Critical event: An event selected because of its unique, illustrative and confirmatory nature
Like event: Same sequence level as the critical event, further illustrates and confirms and repeats the experience of the critical event
Other event: Further event that takes place at the same time as critical and like events

(Webster and Mertova, 2007. p. 79.)

References

American Indian Higher Education Consortium. (2009). *About AIHEC*. Retrieved from American Indian Higher Education Consortium website: http://www.aihec.org/who-we-are/index.htm.

American Indian Higher Education Consortium (2012). *Tribal colleges and universities report, sharing our stories, strengthening out nations through tribal education.*

Atkins, J. (1992) Barbarous dialects should be blotted out ¼. In J. Crawford (Ed.) *Language Loyalties: A Source Book on the Official English Controversy* (pp. 47–51). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Beaulieu, D. (2006). A survey and assessment of culturally based education programs for Native American students in the United States. *Journal of American Indian Education, 45*(2) 50-60.

Bealieau, D. L. (2011). A life in Indian education: The legacy of William G. Demmert, jr. *Journal of American Indian Education, 50*(1), 3-6.

Bergesen, A. (1982). Race riots of 1967: An analysis of police violence in Detroit and Newark. *Journal of Black Studies, 12*(3), 261-274.

Bielenberg, B. (2000). Charter schools for American Indians.

Bishop, R. (2003). Changing power relations in education: Kaupapa Maori messages for 'mainstream' education in Aotearoa/New Zealand. *Comparative Education. 39*(2), 221- 238.

Boyer, P. (1997). *Native American colleges: Progress and prospects. A special report*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, Inc.

Bridgeland, J. M., DiIulio Jr, J. J., & Morison, K. B. (2006). The silent epidemic: Perspectives of high school dropouts. *Civic Enterprises*.

Bridgeman, M. J. & Dilulio, J. J. (2006). The silent epidemic: Perspectives of high school dropouts. A report by Civic Enterprises in association with Peter D. Hart research Association for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Brown, D. (2003). Tribal colleges: Playing a key role in the transition from secondary to post secondary education for American Indian students. *Journal of American Indian Education, 42*(1), 36-43.

Bulkley, K., & Fisler, J. (2003). A decade of charter schools: From theory to practice. *Educational Policy, 17*(3), 317-342.

Burt, L., W. (1986). Roots of the Native American urban experience: Relocation policy in the 1950's. *American Indian Quarterly, 10*(2), 85-99.

Campisi, J., & Hauptman, L. M. (Eds.). (1988). *The Oneida Indian experience, two perspectives*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

Center School. (2014). Retrieved from Center School website: http://www.centerschool.org/

CER. (2000). *Charter schools today: Changing the face of American education.* Washington, DC: Center for Educational Reform.

Child, B. J. (2000). *Boarding School Seasons* (2nd ed.). Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Clandinin, D.J. & Connelly, F. M. (2006). Narrative Inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research. San Francisco: Jossey- Bass.
Committee on Labor and Public Welfare (1969). *Indian education: A national tragedy a national challenge*. 91-501.
Connelly, F.M., Clandinin, D.J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher, 19*(5) pp. 2-14.
Cornelius, C. (1998). Forces that impacted Oneida's move to Wisconsin. Oneida history Conference., *1*(13) pp. 1.
Crawford, D. M., Cheadle, J. E., & Whitbeck, L. B. (2010). Tribal vs. public schools: Perceived discrimination and school adjustment among indigenous children from early to mid-adolescence. *Journal of American Indian Education, 49*(1), 86-106. Retrieved from Deloria, P., J., & Salisbury, N. (Eds.). (2004). *A companion to American Indian history* Hoboken, NJ: Blackwell Publishing.
Deloria, V. J. (1969). *Custer died for your sins an Indian manifesto.* New York, NY: Avon.
Deloria, V. Jr., & Lytle, c., M. (1983). *American Indians, American justice* (2nd ed.). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
Deloria, V., Jr. (1991) *Indian education in America*. Boulder, CO: American Indian science and Engineering society (AISES) Publishing.
Dhunpath, R. (2000). Life history methodology: "Narradigm regained. *Qualitative Studies, 13*(5).
Eastman, C. A. (1991). *Indian boyhood*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
Ebbott, E. (1985). *Indians in Minnesota* (4th ed). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
Editorial. (2008, August 13). Indian school closure holds lessons. *Mpls. Star Tribune.*
Ellis, H., C. (1987). From the battle in the classroom to the battle for the classroom. *American Indian Quarterly, 11*(3), 255-264.
Elias, S. & Feagin, J. (2013). Rethinking racial formation theory: A systemic racism critique. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 36*(6), 931-960.
Faircloth, S., & Tippeconnic, J. (2010). *The dropout rate crisis among American Indian and Alaskan Native students: Failure to respond places the futures of Native people at risk*. Los Angeles, CA: The civil rights project at UCLA. http://www.glitc.org
Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (*M. Bergman Ramos, Trans.).* New York, NY: Continuum, 65-80.
Force, I. N. A. R. T. (1991). *Indian nations at risk: An educational strategy for action.* Washington, DC: US Department of Education.
Gale Group (2017, March 3). *Dorothy Davids (1923-2014).* Retrieved from UWIRE Text website: http://go.galegroup.com.ezp3.lib.umn.edu/ps/i.do?p=PROF&sw=w&u=mnaumntwin&v=2.1&it=r&id=GALE%7CA483832371&asid=bce8da21d7870f5356ab9402dc9fb5fe.
Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council. (2016). *GLITC history and background*. Retrieved from Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council website: http://www.glitc.org/.

Griffiths, M. (1995). Autobiography and epistemology, *Educational Review.*, *47*(1), 1-17.
Hagan, W. (1985). Nineteenth century Indian education programs, Clash of cultures. *Journal of American Indian Education*, (2).
Herzberg, S. (1978). The Menominee Indians: Termination to restoration. *American Indian Law Review, 6*(1), 143-186. doi:10.2307/20068052
Hoeft, M. (2014). *The Bingo queens of Oneida: How two moms started tribal gaming in Wisconsin*. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society.
Huff, D. J. (1997). In *To live heroically institutional racism and American Indian education* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
Heavy Runner, I., & Decelles, R. (2002). Family education model: Meeting the student retention challenge. *Journal of American Indian Education, 41*(2).
Ing, R. (1991). The effects of residential schooling on Native child rearing. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 18*, pp. 65-118.
Innes, R. (2009)"Wait a second. Who are you anyways?" The insider/outsider debate and American Indian studies. *American Indian Quarterly*, *33*(4), 440-461.
Jeffries, R., & Singer, L. (2003). Successfully educating urban American Indian students: An alternative school format. *Journal of American Indian Education, 42*(3), 40-54.
Kelly, C., R. (2010). Orwellian language and the politics of tribal termination (1953-1960). *Western Journal of Communication, 74*, 351-371.
Education, I. A. (1969, November) National Tragedy, A National Challenge (The Kennedy Report). Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
La Marr, C. (2004). Testimony of Cindy La Mar, President National Indian Education Association before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs on the FY Budget Request.
Lambert, V. (2007). Political protest, conflict, and tribal nationalism: The Oklahoma Choctaws and the termination crisis of 1959-1970. *American Indian Quarterly, 31*(2), 283-309.
Lomawaima, K. T. (1996). Estelle Reel, superintendent of Indian schools, 1898-1910: Politics, curriculum and land. *Journal of American Indian Education, 35*(Spring), 5-31.
Lomawaima, K. T. (1999). The unnatural history of American Indian education. In K. G. Swisher & J. W. Tippeconnic III (Eds.), *Next steps: Research and practice to advance Indian education* (pp. 3-31). Charleston, WV: Appalachia Educational Laboratory.
Lomawaima, K. T., (2004). American Indian education by Indians vs for Indians. In P. J. Deloria & N. Salisbury (Ed.), *A companion to American Indian history* Hoboken, NJ: Blackwell Publishing.
Lomawaima, K. T., & McCarty, T. L. (2002). When tribal sovereignty challenges democracy: American Indian education and the democratic ideal. *American Educational Research Journal, 39*(2), 279-305.
Lopenzina, D. (2003). "Good Indian": Charles Eastman and the warrior as civil servant. *American Indian Quarterly, 27*(3/4), 727-757.
McCarty, T. L. & Watahomigie, L.J. (1998). Indigenous community based language

education in the USA. *Language, Culture and Curriculum, 2* (3).
McLaughlin, M. (2014). *The long, hot summer of 1967: Urban rebellion in America*. New York, NY: Springer.
Minnesota Historical Society. (2017). *American Indian movement, [overview]*. Retrieved from Minnesota Historical Society website: http:// http://www.mnhs.org/
National Indian Education Association. (n.d.). National Indian Education Association, constitution and by-laws. Retrieved from National Indian Education Association website:, www.niea.org/.
National Indian Gaming Association. (n.d.). Resolution. Retrieved from National Indian Gaming Association website: www.niga.org/.
O'Brien, E. M. (1990). The demise of Native American education. *Black Issues in Higher Education*, *7*, 15-22.
Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin. (2017). Oneida nation school system. Retrieved from Oneida Nation website: www.oneidanation.org.
Ortiz, A. M., & HeavyRunner, I. (2003). Student access, retention, and success: Models of inclusion and support. *The renaissance of American Indian higher education: Capturing the dream*, 215-240.
Otis, M. (1972). Indian education: A cultural dilemma. In J. Henry (Ed.), *The American Indian reader: Education* (pp. 66-72). San Francisco, CA: Indian Historian Press.
Osborne, D. (2012). *Improving charter school accountability: The challenge of closing failing schools.* Washington D.C.: Progressive Policy Institute.
Patterson, W., M. (2002). "Real Indian songs" the society of American Indians and the use of Native American culture as a means of reform. *American Indian Quarterly, 26* (Winter), 44-66.
Pease-Pretty On Top, J. (2003). Events leading to the passage of the tribally controlled community college assistance act of 1978. *Journal of American Indian Education, 42*(1), 6.
Philip, K., R. (1985). Stride towards freedom: The relocation of Indians to cities 1952-1960. *The Western Historical Quarterly, 16*(2), 175-190.
Reiner, J., & Eder, J. (Eds.). (1989). *A history of Indian education.* Eastern Montana College.
Reyhner, J. (1991). Plans for dropout prevention and special school support services for American Indian and Alaska Native students.
Rusco, E. R. (1991). John Collier: Architect of sovereignty or assimilation? *American Indian Quarterly, 15*(1), 49-54.
Schaafsma, D., & Vinz, R. (2011). *On narrative inquiry: Approaches to language and literacy research.* Paper presented at the National conference on Research in Language and Literacy, New York, NY.
Sharpes, D., K. (1979). Federal education for the American Indian. *Journal of American Indian Education, 19*(1).
Smith, A. (2003). Soul wound: The legacy of Native American schools. *Amnesty International Magazine, Summer*, pp.14-16.

Snyder-Joy, Z., K. (1995). Self-determination in American Indian education: Educator's perspectives on grant, contract, and BIA administered schools. *Journal of American Indian Education, 34*, 20-34.

Stein, W. (1988). *A history of the tribally controlled community colleges, 1968-1978.* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Washington State University, Pullman, WA.

St. Germaine, R. (1995). BIA schools complete first step of reform effort. *Journal of American Indian education, 35*(1), 30-38.

Straus, A.L. (1959). *Mirrors and masks: the search for identity*. Glencoe, IL. Free Press.

Straus, A.L. & Corbine, J. (1998) *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques.* Newbury Parks, CA.

Swisher, G., Karen. (1996). Why Indian people should be the ones to write about Indian education. *American Indian Quarterly, 20*(1), 83-90.

Szasz, M. (1977). *Education and the American Indian*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

Szasz, M. (1999). *Education and the American Indian the road to self-determination since 1928* (3rd ed.) Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

Tippeconnic, J. W. (1995). Editorial on BIA education. *Journal of American Indian Education, 35*, 1-5.

U.S. Department of Education (2010). *Tribal leaders speak: The state of Indian Country Report of the consultation with tribal leaders in Indian country.* Washington, D.C. US Department of Education.

U.S. Department of Education, Indian Nations at Risk Task Force. (1991, October). Indian nations at risk: An educational strategy for action. (Final report). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

U.S Department of the Interior. (2017). *Bureau of Indian Education.* Retrieved from Bureau of Indian Education website: https://www.bie.edu

University of Alaska Fairbanks. (n.d.) Termination era 1950s. Retrieved from University of Alaska Fairbanks website: http: www.uaf.edu/

Webster, L., & Mertova, P. (2007). *Using narrative inquiry as a research method: An introduction to using critical event narrative analysis in research on learning and teaching*. London, UK: Routledge.

Zanartu, C.U. & Majel-Dixon, J. (1996). Parent voices: American Indian relationships with schools. *Journal of American Indian Education,* 36 (1), 15-20.

Appendix A

Numerous policies and laws were implemented to direct the lives of American Indian people in regards to economics, religion, environmental resources and culture. There were also many laws that were enacted over the years that directed American Indian schooling. The following is a partial list of these laws listed in chronological order with a brief description of their intended purpose.

Civilization fund

The Civilization Fund was established by congress in 1819 and provided a small sum annually for academic needs and instruction (Szasz, 1999).

The Snyder Act 1921

The Snyder Act was passed to alleviate mainstream resistance to American Indian children attending public schools. Through this act the BIA was empowered to create and administer schools and educational programs that benefitted American Indian students. (Huff, 1997) A provision in this act provided funds to public schools that enrolled American Indian students.

Johnson- O' Malley Act (JOM) 1934

This law was implemented to be a basic federal aid program with funds earmarked to provide primarily educational assistance to American Indian students in public schools. Funds could also be used for medical and agricultural needs and social welfare. Unfortunately, there is a history of schools using these funds in their general budget rather than providing any support services for their American Indian students.

Indian Reorganization Act (1934)

This law was implemented under the administration of President Roosevelt. The main goal of this Act was to reverse the economic destruction which was caused by the Dawes Act, also known as the Allotment Act. While it did not reverse the destruction of massive land loss it did help tribes recover some lands and halted further land loss. (Rusco, 1991) Section 11 allocated 250,000 annually to American Indian students who wished vocational or trade school funding During John Collier's term of office the passage of this Act were one of the main goals he achieved and one that was not reversed upon his retirement.

PL 81-874 (1958)

This law amended JOM to become a supplemental aid program of educational assistance for American Indian children.

Economic Opportunity Act (1964)

This act supported Head Start, Upward Bound, Volunteers in Service to America, (VISTA) and Indian Community Action Programs (Szasz, 1999).

Indian Education Act (1972)

This act established the Office of Indian Education within the U. S. Department of Education. The National Advisory Council on Indian education was also created through this act. Some parts of the Act authorized various grant programs of a competitive nature for Indian children and adults. Additional funding for American Indian students attending public schools was made available under this act. This act also contained sections which provide funds for teacher training and adult literacy skills (Sharpes, 1979).

My first job in public education as a licensed teacher was as a culture teacher providing supplemental optional cultural instruction to American Indian children in public schools. My salary was paid through a grant from this law and JOM funds. I remember our director writing the grant every year and never knowing if we would have funds for a job next year. The positive aspects of this act was that funds were available the negative was that tribes and American Indian programs and organizations were forced to compete with one another for often dwindling resources and funding.

PL 93-380 (1974)

This law amended the Indian Education Act to include a teacher training program and a fellowship program.

The Indian Self Determination Act and Education Assistance Act (1975)

This act formalized the process by which tribes and Indigenous communities could contract to operate their own educational and social programs. Many former BIA operated schools became tribal schools operated under contracts with the BIA schools. Hundreds of tribes started their own schools under this act (Snyder-Joy 1995). Another component of this act required that public schools which use JOM funds be required to conduct regular American Indian parent committee meetings to promote American Indian parent involvement. As an American Indian parent with a child attending Saint Paul Public Schools I was a member of this committee for many years.

According to (Zanartu & Majel-Dixon, 1996) there are some districts that do not have these required meetings or if they do they conduct the meetings without proper notice to the American Indian parents. There have even been law suits filed because of a

district forging signatures of American Indian parents to make it look like they were following the funding requirements.

PL 100-297 (1988)

BIA funded schools and individual tribes became eligible to apply for formula grants under this Act. Under Title V of the Augustus F. Hawkins Robert T. Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988, tribal groups can fund education programs with BIA grants (Szasz, 1977).

The passage of this act led to tremendous growth in the number of tribal schools and education programs created and implemented by American Indian tribes and organizations (Snyder-Joy 1995). This PL also authorized and funded gifted and talented education for American Indian students.

Native Hawaiian Education Act, PL 101-477 (1990)

This law supports the authorization and development of innovative educational programs to assist Native Hawaiians.

Native American Languages Act, PL 101-477 (1990)

The majority of American Indian languages are endangered. This law supports the use of American Indian languages as a medium of instruction in order to encourage and support American Indian language revitalization. This act is very significant in that it was one of the first acts passed by Congress which directly proclaimed support for Native American languages, placing it in opposition to previous policies enacted by Congress. This law recognizes that supporting the revitalization of American Indian languages will increase student success and performance, increase student knowledge of their culture

and history and build community pride (LaMarr, 2004). However, no allocations of funds to support this resolution were provided for in this Act.

PL 102-524 (1992)

This law amends the Native American Languages Act (NALA) to provide actual grants to assist in the revitalization of American Indian languages. The original NALA of 1990 gave verbal support to Native languages and their instruction but did not provide any funding resources.

PL 103-382 (1994)

This law reauthorized the Indian Education as Title IX-part A of ESEA. The formula grants were amended to require a comprehensive plan to meet the academic and cultural needs of American Indian and Alaskan Native students.

Public Law 103-382 Improving Schools Act of 1994

Since the implementation of NCLB and the subsequent loss of funding, many public schools are pushing out the at risk students, which has resulted in an increase in special education students in the boarding schools and tribal schools. Today, the boarding schools and tribal schools are often the last resort for many students who have experienced trauma, abuse, neglect, and school failure. (St. Germaine, 1995) To address this need Public Law 103-382 authorized the creation of the Therapeutic Residential Model (TRM) program. TRM specifies "services necessary to achieve positive changes in attitudes, behavior, and academic performance of American Indian youth attending boarding Schools" (Dejong, J. A. & Holder, 2006).